

Wang Xuan is now seen as a heroine in her battle against a formidable government. **Page 8**



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# BEIJING TODAY

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 28 2003

NO. 93

CN11-0120

HTTP://BJTODAY.YNET.COM

## More Information Please

### Epidemic tests government's resolve

By Xiao Rong

In a battle against the sudden outbreak of an epidemic, rumors would not have overwhelmed Guangzhou if authoritative voices had doused them earlier.

However, it has proved to be an atypical February for the southern Chinese city, which has been hit by what has now been diagnosed as "atypical pneumonia," posing a challenge for China's first local Freedom of Government Information Act.

"The 'atypical pneumonia' event has been a test of the Guangzhou municipal government's capability to release and handle information, from which they should draw more lessons," comments Zhou Hanhua, researcher at the Institute of Law from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

The storm started on February 8, when rumors began to spread via the Internet and mobile phone short messages about a mysterious and fatal new strain of flu.

A typical version was that many people had died of the disease in Guangzhou since Spring Festival, and that many doctors and nurses had also been infected.

There was no official comment on the rumors, nor any media reports.

For the next three days, shops were overwhelmed with demands for antibiotics, vinegar (used as a disinfectant) and surgical masks, all rumored to help block the virus.

Panic buying even hit neighboring provinces, when shops in Guangzhou sold out of flu medicine and vinegar.

It wasn't until February 11, when the Guangzhou municipal government and Guangdong Public Health Bureau held separate press conferences to clarify the situation, that a semblance of calm was restored.

Five of the 305 people infected with atypical pneumonia between November 6 last year and February 9 across the province have died, according to Huang Qingdao, chief of the provincial public health bureau.

The government promised to take effective measures to control and identify the disease, and ruled out the possibility that the epidemic was caused by any form of plague, anthrax or chicken flu, as had been widely rumored.

The relief was short lived,

however, with another bout of panic buying erupting the next day, this time of salt and rice. A press conference on February 13 again restored calm, with guarantees the government would ensure sufficient supplies of daily necessities and crack down on illegal profiteering by local businesses.

"Facing a second round of panic, the Guangzhou government reacted quickly and released authoritative information to prevent its spread. But for those first three days when the rumors began, an official voice should have been heard earlier," says Jing Huaibin, professor at the College of Public Affairs Management of Zhongshan University.

In the opinion of Zhou Hanhua, who is also one of the main contributors for the draft National Freedom of Information Act now under discussion by the State Council, the event reflects a lack of scientific management of public information on the government's part.

"In the current information age, the traditional way of only reporting emergencies to senior officials, rather than making the information public, can only lead to the rapid spread of rumors," he said. "Information and facts are the most effective way of killing rumors."

By issuing its own Freedom of Information Act on January 1, the Guangzhou government ranks first among China's local governments to emphasize the legal duty of the government to release information to the public.

In a survey conducted by Guangzhou Public Opinion Investigation Center, over 80 percent of the over 500 interviewees were in favor of the new act.

"We have organized several lectures to answer questions from civil servants who have shown a basic understanding of the spirit of the act," said Chen Licheng, vice director of the Legal Office of the Guangzhou



Few villagers in Qongkurqak have slept with a solid roof over their heads since Monday's earthquake.

## Xinjiang Quake Aftermath The Recovery Begins

By Xiao Rong

Classes resumed Wednesday in six tent classrooms near the ruins of former Kezihikemu elementary school, which was destroyed by the earthquake that hit Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Monday.

The quake, measuring 6.8 on the Richter scale, jolted several counties in the west of Xinjiang, mainly Jiashi and Bachu, at 10:03 am Monday (Beijing time), leaving at least 266 locals confirmed dead and over 2,055 injured.

"It was lucky that the earthquake happened during the daytime," says Urhan, a 60-year-old Uyghur woman from Qongkurqak Township, the worst-hit area.

"The family was having breakfast when we felt shaking and heard the rumble. I immediately pushed my two grandsons out of the room and quickly ran out myself. I was knocked down by falling bricks, but I managed to crawl out. A few minutes lat-

er, the house collapsed," she told *Xinhua*.

Sadness pervaded the village as funerals were held for the victims in keeping with the Islamic tradition of burying the deceased within 24 hours of death.

More than 8,800 houses and 900 classrooms were de-

stroyed, most of them mud-brick structures. Aftershocks continued to rock the region Tuesday with the largest reaching more than 5.0 on the Richter scale.

The central government and the State Seismological Bureau dispatched task forces Monday to join local efforts in

the rescue work. The Ministry of Civil Affairs has allocated 8 million yuan (US \$960,000) to the region and some 9,000 tents have been sent to provide temporary accommodation to those left homeless by the quake. Another 1,500 quilts are on the way.

Meanwhile the local government of nearby Kashi has ordered bakeries to provide 80,000 loaves of *nang*, a traditional Uyghur flat bread, to the earthquake victims daily.

To date, the China Red Cross Society has collected 1.86 million yuan (about \$226,000) in donations for the quake victims through a special bank account and a 24-hour hotline.

The earthquake is the most serious since 1949 to hit Jiashi and Bachu, an area that has been rocked by 19 tremors measuring five or above on the Richter scale since 1996.

( Sources: *Xinhua*  
*Beijing Youth Daily* )



Qongkurqak township suffered the most damage from the 6.8 scale quake.  
Photos by Jacky

municipal government.

But the act seems to have been ignored in this case, by both the government and the public.

"The government spokesperson at the press conference didn't even mention the new act, nor have any citizens after the event questioned the late release of official information," said Liu Heng, professor at the Institute of Administrative Law from Zhongshan University, who participated in the drafting of the act.

In his opinion, despite the fact that the act has been in effect for two months, the awareness that it is the duty of the government to release public information still needs to be improved among both government officials and the general public.

"One main problem in implementing the act is how much information should be released and when is the appropriate time to release it, a question often asked by officials," said Chen Licheng.

In the atypical pneumonia event, the Guangdong Public Health Bureau attributed their late public release of the epidemic situation to the fact that the disease is not listed as one of the contagions that should be announced according to the law.

"The government may fear that premature announcement of the epidemic will cause greater panic, but actually it's advisable to release all related informa-

tion as soon as possible so the public can judge themselves," Zhou Hanhua said.

The lack of consistency in the government's release of information may only result in the spread of more unreliable information, which may damage the public's trust in the government, Zhou added.

He stressed the necessity of establishing a regular government information release mechanism to both guarantee the public's right to the truth and also improve the credibility of the government.

"The case will greatly push forward the improvement of the system of the release of governmental information, both in Guangzhou and around China, which is an inevitable trend," concluded Zhou.

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: LI SHI

#### Major Events Causing Panic

\* A spate of panic buying swept China in 1988 in the wake of a rumor that the government would raise commodity prices.

Millions of bank savings were withdrawn as people stocked up on everything from salt to washing machines, resulting in 21.5 percent inflation that year.

\* Starting in late 2001, Tianjin fell prey to

a rumor that people wielding HIV-contaminated syringes were attacking young women. Business in major shopping areas dropped by almost half.

Tianjin Public Security Bureau issued a statement on January 24, 2002, confirming that a small number of criminals were responsible for the attacks.

After four months of wild rumors, five men were sentenced in Tianjin and Beijing for syringe assaults. However none of the syringes

contained any kind of virus.

\* A string of bomb threats around northeast China's Shenyang caused panic among local residents earlier this year. A bank robbery in which a bomb was detonated on January 18 intensified the fear.

By releasing information about the continuing investigation into the cases and promising to strengthen citywide security, the Shenyang government helped boost public confidence.



# Special Expats Get Longer Stays

By Ivy Zhang / Su Qiang

A total of 46 expatriates in Beijing, hailing from nearly a dozen countries, were awarded three or five-year residence permits and multiple-entry visas at a ceremony held by Beijing Public Security Bureau on Tuesday afternoon.

This is the first time foreign residents have received such benefits since the founding of New China in 1949. It also marked the start of a new policy that allows certain expatriates in Beijing and their families to get residence permits with durations of two to five years. Those permits and accompanying visas can be issued within one workweek.

In the past, expatriates

had to renew their residence permits every six months or one year.

Marc Bailliar, chief representative of Air France in China, as well as his wife and two daughters, received a three-year residence permit and multi-entry visa. Bailliar, who has lived in China for one year, called the permits much more convenient than previous versions.

State policy says that foreigners in Beijing who fall in one of the following five groups, along with their spouse and children under the age of 18, can receive longer-term residence permission: senior consultants invited by state authorities or the local govern-

ment, and senior management or technology staff participating in state key projects; individuals that have made great contributions to Beijing and China; senior academic staff at Beijing research institutes or universities; senior management staff at foreign invested companies; and individuals who have invested over \$3 million in China.

According to the policy of the local public security bureau, government-backed foreign students can receive residence permits with terms of one to four years, chief representatives of foreign representative offices can get one to three year permits, foreign employees of foreign invested companies and



Marc Bailliar receives his three year residence permit from a PSB officer.

Photo by Zhuang Zhuang

their families can get one to two year permits, and foreign managers and technical staff work-

ing on Sino-foreign oil or gas projects can get one to four year permits.

## State Grants Tax Breaks to Beijing Olympics

By Hou Mingxin

In order to support the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, China's Ministry of Finance, State Administration of Taxation and State Administration of Customs have issued a notice which will provide tax breaks and special policies to the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG), the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Chinese Olympic Committee, and participants in the Games, according to a *Beijing Youth Daily* reported run on Monday.

The notice stipulates that athletes competing in the games will not need to pay individual income taxes on any prize money or other income earned during the Beijing Olympics.

Sponsorship payments in the form of money or goods from enterprises and organizations will also be exempt from taxation.

BOCOG will benefit from the new policy through the lifting of taxes on its share of television broadcasting revenues, money and goods from the IOC's world sponsorship program, income from ticket sales and other revenue sources.



Photo by Wei Tong

## Deng Yaping Joins Olympic Committee

By Hou Mingxin

The Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG) has added a new, high-profile member to its staff. At a press conference held Monday in Beijing, the committee welcomed four-time Olympic gold medal winner Deng Yaping to its team.

Under the title of "Project Expert", Deng will work in BOCOG's marketing department. Her main responsibility is attracting domestic sponsors, according to Hu Chunzheng, a committee spokesman.

"Today is my first day at work at the committee. It's an honor to work here, and I feel I am up to this new challenge," Deng said at the press conference. She is also a member of the International Olympic Committee's Athletes Commission, Sports and Environment Commission and Ethics Commission.

"I hope that with my personal influence and charm, I can make a contribution to the Beijing Olympic Games," the former table tennis champ added. "Of course, doing a good job will take teamwork and cooperation with my colleagues."

Not only an accomplished athlete, Deng received a bachelor's degree from Tsinghua University in 2001, a master's from Nottingham University in the UK in 2002, and is currently pursuing a PhD in economics at Cambridge University.

When asked whether her studies could influence her work at BOCOG, she said the job would always come first.

## City Sets Up Body to Net Investment

By Zhao Hongyi

Beijing has granted administrative powers to a new bureau in the hopes of attracting more overseas investment.

"The municipal government will provide a better and more complete range of services to overseas investors currently operating in the city and those that come in the future," said Zhang Mao, vice mayor in charge of the municipality's overall foreign business affairs at the launch of the Beijing Investment Promotion Bureau yesterday.

The bureau will work in conjunction with the Beijing Foreign Investment Service Center, an organization that provides policy-relevant consulting and logistics

services and recommends investment projects and partners to prospective foreign investors. The new body will offer an even wider range of services and hold some administrative powers, such as "a green channel for investment approval", by which investors can finish all registration and approval procedures for their projects within one day.

In addition, the bureau will focus on coordinating the city's overall efforts to create a better environment for overseas investors.

"The center is a warm club for the overseas investors active in Beijing," said Sun Changtai, director-general of the bureau. "We hope the new bureau will continue that role and reach out to more

clients and friends."

Beijing is home to over 9,000 enterprises that have received investment from overseas sources, including 160 Fortune 500 companies. Most of these enterprises are in high-tech industries. More than 8,000 overseas companies have set up representative offices in the capital.

Zhang told the media the city has introduced \$18.95 billion of overseas investment in the past five years, including \$5.49 billion in 2002 alone. The municipal government hopes to encourage greater investment in the service and environmental protection sectors.

The bureau has set up a public-accessible website at [www.fdbijeiing.org.cn](http://www.fdbijeiing.org.cn).

## Government Eases Limits on Trade JVs

By Ema Ma

The revised provisions for the establishment of joint venture import-export firms in China, released on January 31 by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, will go into effect next Sunday.

According to the new policy, foreign investors can establish import and export joint ventures after tallying an annual trading volume of \$30 million with China over three successive years. That restric-

tion is lowered to \$20 million for companies that want to establish ventures in China's central and western regions, part of the government's efforts to encourage the economic development of those areas.

The paid-in-capital requirement has also dropped from 100 million yuan to 50 million yuan for projects in the country's eastern regions and 30 million yuan for those in the central and western areas.

In another major change, foreign investors can now hold up to

49 percent stakes in trading joint ventures, nearly double the former limit of 25 percent.

The revisions also allow import-export joint ventures to be set up nationwide. Previous policy limited such companies to Pudong and Shenzhen.

Following the commitments it made to become a member of the World Trade Organization, China will grant all joint venture companies free export and import rights before the end of 2004.

## Public Schools Open Doors to Foreign Kids

By Lily Li

As of last Saturday, the children of foreign residents of Beijing have been allowed to enroll in any public primary or middle school in the city. As part of the policy change, the Beijing Municipal Education Commission has abandoned the tests previously mandatory for prospective foreign students.

In 2002, the number of foreign students in kindergartens, primary schools and middle schools in the city reached 5,000, includ-

ing 1,800 enrolled at the Beijing Shunyi International School.

Before this policy change, international students were only allowed entrance into 40 schools. That group was made up of four schools set up by foreign embassies, 11 schools funded by foreign individuals or agencies like Beijing Shunyi International School and Western Academy of Beijing, and 25 Chinese schools approved by the Beijing Municipal Education Commission, including Beijing Huiwen High School, the High

School Attached to Renmin University of China, Beijing Huijia Private College and Fangcaodi primary school.

Those 25 Chinese schools remain the only local public schools allowed to recruit students from overseas.

Foreign students in local schools will not have to take part in political classes and activities. Students that succeed in passing schools' final examinations will be awarded normal diplomas and certificates.

## Compensation Fees Cancelled for Students Heading Abroad

By Hou Mingxin

The Ministry of Education has decided to abolish its policy of charging educational compensation fees from Chinese students seeking to study abroad, according to a report published in *Beijing Youth Daily* last Saturday.

As part of the change of policy, the ministry has stipulated that all compensation fees collected by local education administrations since November 1, 2002, should be returned to the students, the report continued.

The ministry canceled the fees and has simplified the procedures for receiving approval to study abroad in keeping with a State Council policy issued November 1 last year that canceled some administrative examinations, approval procedures and

charges for going abroad.

From 1950 through the early 1990s, higher education was all but free in China, with many students actually receiving government subsidies to support their education. With the rapid growth of the country's economy, however, free education was deemed incompatible with the demands of a market economy.

In 1996, colleges and universities nationwide began charging tuition fees, thereby nullifying requirements that students heading abroad compensate the government for subsidies granted to support their studies.

As the number of Chinese students looking to study abroad swelling in the 1980s and early 1990s, the national government in 1993 began charging compensational fees from students who

did not complete their mandatory state service period, set at three years for holders of higher degrees, five years for university graduates and two years for graduates of two-year colleges. The fees ranged from several thousand to twenty thousand yuan and were allocated to research projects carried out by Chinese scholars that returned from abroad, according to Ding Hongyu, director of the Beijing Education Committee's study abroad office.

He said, "We have received over 300,000 yuan in compensation fees from a total of fifty students since last November 1. Last Saturday, we returned money to four students, and we will issue a notice to local universities and colleges concerning the return of compensation fees in the near future."

## Petroleum Reserves Key to State Security

By Ema Ma

Appeals for the establishment of a strategic petroleum reserves system have reached fevered pitch in the past few weeks in China, with the world oil price hitting its highest point in two years spurred by the looming war between the US and Iraq.

After becoming a net importer of petroleum in 1993, the volume of China's oil imports increased 26 fold by the end of 1996. Currently, 30 percent of China's oil supply comes from imports, 60 percent of which are from the Middle East. Customs statistics indicate that in 2000, China paid 7.2 billion yuan as a result of rising oil prices, the equivalent of a 0.7 percent GDP drop.

The threat to national security posed by the lack of reserves may be more serious than its economic effects. China's current crude oil reserves are only enough to sustain productivity for 21 days.

Zhang Dawei, deputy director of the Petroleum and Gas Strategy Research Center under the Ministry of Land and Resources, said in an interview with a reporter of *China Youth Daily* last Sunday, "Measures have been taken to minimize the potential threat. First, we will expand imports from countries in the Russian Federation and Southeast Asia. Second, the national government has already approved the construction of a reserves system, towards which first stage investment will reach 14 billion yuan. And third, the Ministry of Land and Resources has located ten promising petroleum and gas sites in the Songpan-Aba area in Sichuan Province and the Qiangtang basin in Tibet."

## New Website Offers Info on AIDS

By Lily Li

The Beijing AIDS/STD (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) Prevention and Control Association opened a new website, [www.bjaidass.org](http://www.bjaidass.org), on Friday last week to disseminate information about STDs, including AIDS, and related policies.

"The website is one part of the government's efforts to help people with HIV/AIDS," said Guo Jiyong, vice secretary of the Beijing Health Bureau, at the launch ceremony for the website.

According to Guo, testing of 600,000 Beijing residents in 2002 showed 428 people had contracted HIV during a one-year period, made up of 66 locals, 354 people from other provinces and eight foreigners. Their ages range from 20 to 39, and 72 percent of those infected are women.

"Drug use was the top source of infection, responsible for 225, or 52.5 percent, of the cases. Sexual transmission was second, responsible for 68 cases," added the vice secretary.

In conjunction with the site, the association has also opened a 24-hour HIV/AIDS hotline at 6227 5550.

## Group Moves to Stop Spread of Spam

By Su Wei

On Tuesday, the Collaborative Workshop of the Internet Society of China (ISC) held its first working conference since being founded in November last year. The organization met to kick off a campaign to raise the awareness of Chinese enterprises and citizens about the need to take action against the rising tide of junk email, popularly called spam, cluttering the Internet.

In a national survey released by the China Internet Network Information Center in January, over half of the average 16 emails received by each Chinese netizen per week are junk, and the proportion is rising every day.

Huang Chengqing, vice general secretary of the ISC, said that the organization has analyzed the over 3,000 pieces of spam they have received since last November and found most come from overseas sources.

According to Huang, China lags far behind most other countries in acting against the flood of junk email.

Workshop employee Wang Yan said one of the difficulties facing the new domestic campaign is that Chinese enterprises and individuals lack an awareness of the need to protect themselves from junk email.

He hopes that the workshop's newly prepared Guide to Refusing Spam will help strengthen public awareness by teaching people how to detect, prevent and report junk email.



# GE Ignites Acquisition Wave

By Ema Ma

The acquisition of the majority interest in Kvaerner Power Equipment of Hangzhou, China by GE Power Systems announced last Monday is widely seen as the start of a new round of acquisitions by foreign companies in China.

The purchase not only marks the largest acquisition by GE Power Systems in China, but is also the second buyout by GE in China since last April's 100 percent share purchase of Zhongshan Plastech Sunsheet by GE Plastics.

Kvaerner Power Equipment, an equity joint venture established in 1995, was 61 percent owned by Norwegian Kvaerner Energy and 39 percent by Chinese State-owned Hangzhou Elec-

tric Equipment Works (Hangfa). It is one of the leading suppliers of hydropower generation equipment in China.

The new company will be named GE Hydro Asia, with GE owning 90 percent and Hangzhou Industrial Asset Management, Hangfa's parent company, holding the remaining 10 percent.

GE's successful takeover reflects a new trend in China's capital market; that is, from establishing a new joint venture to more efficient direct acquisition. According to an analysis report issued recently by Morgan Stanley, China is growing to be the most active acquisition market in the world, with global mergers and acquisitions down by 40 percent in 2002.

The Chinese government is also pushing the trend on the policy side, to fulfill its commitment to open the market gradually after entering the WTO.

A series of rules issued one after another last November opened the floodgates for acquisitions by cash-rich foreign investors for shares in mainland-listed companies. These included allowing the purchase of unlisted state-owned and corporate shares and dealing in freely traded shares by Qualified Foreign Institutional Investors, and a stipulation on the reorganization of state-owned enterprises with foreign investment.

Major cities in China have welcomed the regulations: Shanghai has announced seven areas that welcome

foreign investment besides the general investment guidance set by the central government.

Beijing Economic Commission spokesman Chang Qing mentioned at the press conference on GE Power System's acquisition that Beijing will reverse the outdated perception of "retaining a controlling stake".

In a seminar held in January, Zhou Yuqiu, deputy director of Beijing's Economic Commission expressed dissatisfaction with Beijing's reorganization process over the past few years, citing the fact that state-owned shares still account for 70 percent in 212 reorganized state owned enterprises, in breach of the original intention of the reorganization.

## Minsheng Offers First Convertible Corporate Bonds

By Shan Jinliang

China's first private capital controlling bank, Minsheng Banking Corporation announced a four-billion-yuan convertible corporate bond offering in Beijing Wednesday, the first convertible corporate bond offering by a bank in China.

A corporate bond is basically an IOU issued by a company that promises to pay a fixed rate of interest for a given period, and at the end of this period investors are repaid the original investment.

Convertible bonds offer some of the benefits of both stocks and bonds since they can earn interest even when the stock is trading down or sideways. Previously, some Chinese companies have issued convertible corporate bonds after they were listed on the stock market, but none received positive responses.

The five-year bond has been set with an annual face interest of 1.5 percent, and can be converted into stock from the sixth month after the offer to the expiration date, that is from August 27, 2003 to February 27, 2008.

Chairman of Minsheng's board, Jing Shuping, said earlier that the bank would grow no slower this year than it did last year, and the additional capital was urgently needed. On Monday, a *Beijing Times* article said the bond issue could be a move by Minsheng to strengthen itself before listing in Hong Kong or New York early next year.

The bank's vice president Wei Shenghong said that 60 percent of the capital raised from the bonds will be used to support private companies. It will also be used to increase its number of branches nationwide from the current 150, much fewer than some of its bigger rivals.

## Bertelsmann China Consolidates Websites

By Shan Jinliang

Bertelsmann China announced Tuesday the formal launch of its new website, www.bol.com.cn, which combines the company's two original websites.

Established in 1999, www.bbc.com.cn was a channel for Bertelsmann Club members to find information and purchase products, while www.bolchina.com, launched in 2001, was a search platform accessible to all Internet users.

The integration is a move to combine the strengths of the two and increase efficiency, according to a Bertelsmann China press release.

"The integration will activate current customers and enforce cross-purchasing activities," said Christian Unger, CEO of Bertelsmann Club and BOL China, "and meanwhile, BOL can draw more potential customers by sharing the customer base with the club." The company said in the month the new website had been running on a trial basis, daily visits rose by 100 percent over the same period last year, and daily online recruitment increased by 50 percent.

## Sohu Seeks Gold in Online Games

By Tony Shaw

Sohu, one of the three Chinese portal websites listed on the Nasdaq announced its entry Tuesday into the online games market, with the release of its game Knight Online.

Of the other two portals, Netease has been offering online games for two years, while Sina made its debut in the market one month ago.

Sohu said the release of its first online game coincides with the fifth anniversary of its website (www.sohu.com).

CEO Charles Zhang has vowed that online games will contribute 10 percent of Sohu's overall revenue this year, equal to US \$5 million. Analysts predict the online games market in China this year will be worth over two billion yuan.

## Yanjing Beer to Sponsor Rockets

By Hou Mingxin

US based Harbrew Importers has signed a \$1-million-a-year, six-year sponsorship deal with US National Basketball League team, the Houston Rockets, according to a report in Tuesday's *Beijing Evening News*.

Harbrew Importers is the sole US importer and distributor of Yanjing beer, and the deal is the first seven-figure sponsorship coming from a Chinese brand, the report said.

Chinese basketball star Yao Ming, is the main reason behind the multi-million dollar deal. The 2.26-meter-tall (7 foot 5 inch) 22 year old joined the Rockets last year as the league's No. 1 draft pick, and NBA executives believe the towering center has huge marketing potential in the first decade in 21st century, comparable to Magic Johnson, Larry Bird and Michael Jordan in the 1980s and 1990s.

Yanjing beer now has court-side advertisements at the Compaq Center, the Rockets' home arena in Houston, promoting Yanjing in English and Chinese, and the beer is sold at the arena during games.



Microsoft chairman Bill Gates signed an agreement on personal online banking with Jiang Jianqing (left), president of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China yesterday. Earlier the same day, Gates signed a memorandum with the Beijing government on the city's office information promotion. The three-day visit is Gates' eighth to China.

## Incentive Travel to Boost Tourism

By Shan Jinliang

Beijing Tourism Bureau has listed incentive travel as a top priority for boosting inbound tourism this year, hiring US Kingsway Incentives vice president Issy Scher as the city's first foreign expert to promote the sector.

Incentive travel refers to overseas trips provided by businesses as a reward to high-performing employees.

Wang Qing, the bureau's marketing and promotional director for meetings, incentive travel, conventions and exhibitions, told *Beijing Today* Wednesday that higher profits compared with other travel categories is a major reason for pushing incentive travel as the city's next tourism growth point. He added that the slow rise of traditional sightseeing travel was another factor.

According to Wang, Beijing's numerous world famous scenic and historic sites make it an ideal choice for incentive travel, but warned that insufficient qualified staff and lack of experience among domestic travel agencies were currently impeding development of the sector.

Wang said Beijing will introduce more outside talent and advanced expertise to promote the business, "we will invite over 50 professional incentive travel companies to China, and in the coming two years, we also plan to join in a few international incentive travel organizations to become better acquainted with the industry."

He added a series of free training sessions will be conducted for local travel agencies, and more overseas advertising will be directed at incentive travel.

Meanwhile Scher says he will start promoting Beijing's incentive travel market next month. This will involve taking representatives of several local travel agencies on promotional tours to Britain and Spain, followed by a similar trip to Frankfurt, Germany in mid April.

## Intel Moves on Mobile Market

By Shan Jinliang

Intel China announced Monday it was seeking the support of domestic companies in its assault on China's handset market, in an attempt to emulate its success in capturing China's PC market ten years ago.

On February 13, Intel globally launched its new PXA800F handset CPU. Based on so-called "wireless-Internet-on-a-chip" technology, the chip handles computing, telecommunications and memory, and is intended to replace the three chips that traditionally control these functions, according to the company.

"We not only sell the chip, but hope to build it into an open-framework standard, in the same way we have done with the current PC," said Xi Qing, PR manager of Intel China.

**No deals with top handset makers**

International Data Group (IDG) News Service commented that in the cell-phone market, Intel is a newcomer and is striving to catch up with market leaders Motorola and Texas Instruments.

To garner international support, the company has started talks with some of

the world's leading mobile phone makers, but no agreements have been reached so far, the company says. "We are still holding talks with these high-end handset makers," said Lai Zhifeng, marketing manager of Intel Asia Pacific.

**Seeking to replay PC success**

Intel China invited nine Chinese mobile phone makers, including Bird, TCL and Legend, to attend the press conference for the launch of its first wireless chip in February, but no foreign manufacturers were present.

Intel China announced the cooperation with TCL based on other wireless chip technology last April. While on Tuesday Capitel's PR company told *Beijing Today* they have just stopped the talks with Intel and would not make any further comments.

But Intel China said they are still confident of copying the success in China ten years ago in the cooperation with Chinese computer makers as Legend and Founder. Xi said, "These Chinese computers were quite small then, and now they come to dominate the Chinese PC market; and we are pretty sure that Chi-

nese mobile phone market will be also captured by domestic makers, which enjoy a high potential for growth."

Intel could refer the following figures to support its prediction. China's domestic mobile phone makers have seized an over 25 percent market share in 2002, while it was only around 15 percent one year ago. A latest survey from the Ministry of Information Industry revealed Bird and TCL were directly behind Motorola and Nokia in China in 2002.

**High price or immature tech**

The chip's high price is one factor that might stand in the way of Intel winning further cooperation with local mobile phone makers. Although it has fallen from US \$45 to \$35 for bulk purchases, it is still considered unacceptable by most Chinese manufacturers. Intel China maintains the price is justified, given that the single chip actually handles the functions of three.

Some IT analysts say the technology, rather than the price, would be the major hurdle for Intel to achieve its global goal, as the company has not had its technology tested by the market.

## Toshiba Releases New CDMA Handset

By Chen Ying

At a press conference Wednesday to launch its latest CDMA mobile phone, president of Toshiba Mobile Communications Tetsuya Mizoguchi said the company aimed to become the No. 1 manufacturer of CDMA handsets in China.

Mizoguchi said the new model T618X is the first CDMA mobile in China that can record and transmit documents, in the form of a photo or short movie. It also supports China Unicom's latest high-speed data transfer service, called "color e," based on the CDMA-1X system.

Already one of the top CDMA manufacturers in Japan, Toshiba started its involvement with China's CDMA market in a joint venture with Nanjing Postel, China's largest mobile manufacturer in 2000.

Nanjing Postel Wong Zhi Telecommunications, which is invested by the Beijing based Postel, Toshiba and Wong's Industrial (Hong Kong), began producing CDMA handsets last May. The T618X, its third and most advanced model, was released in Japan last October.

China last year overtook the US as



Toshiba's Tetsuya Mizoguchi

the largest mobile consumer, with more than 200 million people currently owning mobiles. But the market remains far from saturated, with both local and international manufacturers turning their attention to CDMA.

Nineteen companies now own licenses to produce CDMA handsets in China; to succeed, they must learn how to adapt to the local market.

Frost and Sullivan, an international consultancy company, released the re-

sults of its latest research into China's telecommunications market on February 20. According to the document, entertainment will become the new point of growth in the CDMA market, pointing to how the telecommunications business has gradually evolved from providing basic voice services to providing comprehensive convenience and entertainment.

According to the latest customer data published by China Unicom, the increase rate of customers has declined dramatically.

It may well be time to pay more attention to developing new mobile functions and provide a wider range of services to satisfy customers' future requirements. As the Frost and Sullivan report says, providing more services can attract more customers in future.

"We believe and expect the day for entertainment will come to China soon," said Toshiba's Tetsuya Mizoguchi, expressing the hope that Toshiba would have more opportunities to cooperate with local operators.



# Tackle Deflation, Japan Tells G7

Paris, February 21 (Reuters) - Japanese Finance Minister Masajuro Shiokawa urged the Group of Seven to combat deflationary pressures around the world that could worsen if a war on Iraq began.

"If the so-called geopolitical risks materialize, a major concern is that deflation around the world will become more serious," Shiokawa said to finance ministers and central bank chiefs from the G7 countries.

Although he did not mention China by name, his repeated remarks recently about the need for G7 to discuss foreign exchange liberalization have been taken by financial markets as referring to the yuan.

Shiokawa has said in the past that he thought the yuan, which is effectively pegged to the US dollar, was too weak given China's economic fundamentals and should be revalued or floated at some point.

## China's Finance Minister Defends Yuan

Beijing, February 19 (Dow Jones Newswires)-China's Finance Minister Xiang Huaicheng has defended the value of the yuan against calls for a revaluation, arguing the impact of the currency on the Japan and US economies has been overstated.

In a wide-ranging interview with the Finnish newspaper Helsingin Sanomat, Xiang pointed out the US economy is about 8-9 times larger than

the Chinese economy.

"Chinese exports to the United States are only a couple of per cent of the total US imports," Xiang said. "Therefore the Renminbi has only a limited impact on the US economy. And the Chinese economy is only a quarter of the size of the Japanese economy."

With Japan's economy still in the doldrums, Japanese government officials have urged a revaluation of the yuan.

US officials and the International Monetary Fund have also suggested China consider eventually allowing more flexibility within the managed float currently used to determine the value of the yuan.

## Analysts' Take:

**Dr Dong Tao, Senior Regional Economist, Credit Suisse First Boston**

A revaluation of the Renminbi to 5:1 against the US dollar is possible in the mid-to-long term between 2006 and 2008, but not in the short term.

China still has a huge number of low-skilled laborers in the countryside. This ready supply of cheap labor will keep China competitive.

China is facing deflationary pressure. But domestic consumption could be shifted to durable goods like houses, autos and PCs, rather than imports, which would ease that pressure.

-China Economic Times, February 24, 2003

## China Uses Inflation to Stimulate Growth

Since the second quarter of 2002, China has steadily increased monetary injection into the economy, aiming at creating a positive environment for a new round of reforms in its financial industry and reducing the pressure of deflation to offset calls for a revaluation of the yuan.

The People's Bank of China's January report disclosed last week that domestic deposits in banks soared by one trillion yuan in the first month, reaching 9.81 trillion. The cause, argues the report, was the continued increase of monetary injection by the central bank.

In the same month, China's average price for production means increased by 4.8 percent over January last year and 0.9 percent over last December. The price is expected to increase further this year.

Song Guoqing, professor of the Research Center of China's Economy, an institute of Beijing University, explained that monetary injection is the third tool to be used by the Chinese government to offset deflationary pressure and keep continuous growth. Previously it tried reducing credit loans and cutting deposit interest rates but these measures proved ineffective.

The most critical point lies ahead, said Mr. Song, in the ability of the financial administration of China to keep inflation in an acceptable and manageable range.

-Business Post, February 22, 2003

## Bush Wants \$95 Billion to Cover Cost of War

New York, February 26 (Reuters) - The Bush administration is preparing supplemental spending requests totaling as much as \$95 billion for a war with Iraq.

The \$95 billion would be to cover a war, its aftermath and new expenses to fight terrorism, officials told the newspaper. The total could be as low as \$60 billion because Pentagon budget planners don't know how long a conflict will last.

Iraq's oil reserves are second in size only to Saudi Arabia's, and US officials say money from them could be instrumental in rebuilding Iraq and could lower the total cost of the conflict.

## US to Release Oil Reserves if Needed

Washington, February 25 (Reuters) - US Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham said the United States was ready to act quickly to release emergency oil reserves if necessary to offset any disruption to Middle East supplies in the event of war with Iraq.

The US emergency oil stockpile was created in 1975 and currently has about 600 million barrels of crude oil stored in deep underground salt caverns in Texas and Louisiana. It can be drawn at a rate of 4.3 million barrels a day for 90 days.

Crude prices have in recent weeks risen to two-year highs on fears that a war in Iraq, the world's eighth largest oil exporter, could slow supplies from the Middle East, which pumps a third of the world's oil.



Reuters Photo

# Financial Winter Arrives in London



Two clients at ATMs in downtown London Monday this week, while a homeless person waits for their mercy in the middle.

The fourth quarter of 2002 saw the largest fall in transaction fall in volume since 1992 in London's

financial industry.

The Confederation of British Industry estimates the industry will cut at least 22,000 jobs in the first three months of this year.

Xinhua Photo

# Security Tops IT Priority List

San Jose, California, February 20 (www.isourceonline.com) - As the threat of war looms and the government mulls imposing tighter restrictions on information technology, security is shaping up to be the most critical IT priority for the software market in 2003, according to a new survey by Dataquest, a unit of technology consultants Gartner.

Manufacturers rated security as the most important IT project, followed by enterprise resource planning (ERP), including upgrades and extensions. Web services came in at No. 3. Security also topped the list of IT spending priorities in a recent survey of chief information officers by investment bank Morgan Stanley.

## Analysts' Take:

**Wang Xiaochun, IT security engineer, CNNIC (China Internet Network Information Center)**

The market for IT security software products is expected to grow rapidly and become more profitable in years to come.

Terrorist attacks, intellectual property rights protection and business secrets protection, malicious attacks and hackers' harassment are the major factors behind the trend.

The US government released "National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace" on February 14, recommending a national cyberspace security response system and requiring all US companies to further secure their websites.

Microsoft said it would release software this summer allowing corporations to control access to sensitive internal documents, such as financial statements and e-mail. The new software will allow users to control access to documents they have created, including whether the document can be forwarded, copied, or printed and whether a recipient can hold it indefinitely, or if it will expire after a certain time.

Last year, Microsoft launched the "Trustworthy Computing" initiative, a bid to make networks more secure and to head off criticism the company's own software has been too vulnerable to attack.

## Merrill Lynch Will Pay \$80M to Settle Enron Case

February 21 (USA Today) - Merrill Lynch executives said the firm will pay \$80 million to settle a Securities and Exchange Commission investigation of its questionable financial deals with energy trader Enron in 1999.

The tentative settlement, if approved by SEC commissioners, will end the agency's investigation into several energy trades between Merrill and Enron, plus a \$7 million investment made by Merrill into three Enron power-generating barges off Nigeria's coast.

As part of the settlement, the brokerage firm also agreed to an SEC injunction barring the firm from future violations of federal securities laws.

(Edward Iwata)

## Japan Chooses New Central Bank Head

Tokyo, February 25

(AP) - The nomination of central bank "old boy" Toshihiko Fukui to the job of Japan's top banker probably signals more of the same in monetary policy, snuffing out hopes for decisive action to fight the nation's economic slide, analysts say.

The silver-haired Fukui is a former Bank of Japan deputy governor, who earned the nickname "Prince of the BOJ" over his 40 years at the bank. Now head of a think tank, Fukui, 67, has strong ties with corporate executives and was widely considered the ideal pick by business circles.

But financial markets and some analysts had hoped for someone who would shake up the central bank to tackle Japan's decade-old slump blamed on spiraling prices. Fukui, whose selection was announced Monday, is widely expected to continue the policies of his predecessor, Masaru Hayami, 77. Hayami's five-year term ends March 19.



Toshihiko Fukui

Xinhua Photo

# Ruble Rumblings from Russia

Moscow, February 20 (www.moscowtimes.ru) - Emboldened by the unprecedented strength of its currency, which is rising against the hard currencies of the west for the first time in recent memory, the Russian government is mulling grandiose plans for the ruble, including making it fully convertible internationally and using it as the basis of a monetary union with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Belarus.

"It is possible and it is time to think of a unified currency system for the Eurasian Economic Union," Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov told the leaders of the five-member EEU during their summit in Moscow last week.

Kasyanov's remarks came just a day before the Cabinet is scheduled to debate the Economic Development and Trade Ministry's blueprint for growth through 2005, which calls for, among other things, "securing full convertibility of the national currency in the near future."

That is, the ministry wants the ruble to join the buck, euro, yen and pound as permanent features on exchange-rate boards in banks around the world as soon as possible.

## Analysts' Take:

**Li Yunhua, researcher, Institute for Studies of Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia,**

## Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

The ruble will not become internationally convertible in the foreseeable future, even though it is convertible within Russia.

First, the Russian economy is too fragile. The country relies heavily on its natural energy resources exports, mainly oil and gas.

The high oil price on the world market in the past several years eased Russia's foreign debt burden and supported its economic growth. Unfortunately, it is not sustainable. A fluctuation in the oil price will interrupt the increase of Russia's hard currency income.

Second, Russia's domestic economy lacks dynamism and demand. Its economy has not entered a stable growth track so it cannot provide a clear prospect. Neither is the business environment transparent.



Russia's Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev

AP Photo

Third, Russia has not yet become a World Trade Organization member and has no credit for its ruble on the world market.

But we cannot dismiss the possibility, either. Technically, there is no problem for a country to make its currency convertible on the world market today. The problem is that even if the ruble becomes convertible, demand for it is still low.

The ruble should be convertible one day. But before that, you need to eliminate all sorts of restrictions on the movements of investments. But in Russia, if these restrictions are removed, there is always a danger of quick capital outflow.

A third possibility is that the ruble will be the only circulated currency in the five member countries of the Eurasian Economic Union of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Belarus. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev expects the ruble could once again become the principal currency in the region by 2011. But being the single currency of those five countries is not the same thing as a convertible ruble. What's more, the Russia-Belarus monetary union has not yet been established after nearly a decade of discussion.



New York, February 26 (Reuters) - New York officials have decided on a post-9-11 design concept by renowned German-based architect Daniel Libeskind ahead of the other finalist team of New York architects led by Rafael Vinoly and Frederic Schwartz who envisaged a pair of matching lattice-work skyscrapers.

Libeskind's proposed design is a 70-story office building with "Gardens of the World" on the top floor high above office level. The plan calls for a tower 1,776 feet high - symbolizing the year of US independence.

There is still expected to be more debate and refinement of the plan, and officials have estimated construction will begin in 2005 at the earliest.

Xinhua / AP Photo



# Subways Subject of Safety Concern

By Su Wei

The Beijing Fire Fighting Bureau expressed their determination to improve the safety conditions in all local subway trains and stations at a press conference last Friday.

An official of the bureau who requested anonymity said that inspections of the fire prevention and safety conditions of the city's subway and light rail systems have found the fire-fighting equipment currently installed to be "basically sound," though some breathing masks set up

for use by rescue personnel need to be replaced.

"The subway has been a focus of ours for a long time, and we have run several fire drills under a variety of supposed conditions to make sure we can keep the system safe," he said. The official added that more tests of smoke discharging and extinguishing equipment are scheduled.

According to a February 22 report in the *Beijing Morning Post*, the bureau's Standards for Installing Signs for Fire-fighting and Evacuation Safety will take effect in the near future.

That regulation stipulates that new buildings must have illuminated emergency signs installed in the walls and floors of all evacuation routes. Wall signs must be spaced under 10 meters apart and floor signs under five meters apart to allow people to crawl to safety in case of a fire.

The report continues that because most emergency lights installed to date are ceiling-mounted, they could be obscured by smoke in fires and make it difficult for people to escape.

## Campus Life Returns to Normal After Two Cafeteria Bombings

By Su Wei

Bombs crafted from homemade dynamite exploded in two dining halls at Tsinghua University and Beijing University in midday on Tuesday, injuring nine people.

An unnamed spokesman for the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau said later that day that none of those injured have died.

"We are conducting an intense investigation and will spare no effort in trying to find who is responsible for these two incidents," said the spokesman. "All we are free to say at present is what has been released by the Xinhua News Agency."

The bomb at Tsinghua University went off at around 11:50 am in the Heyuan Dining Hall, which sits in the center of campus. At the time, over 30 people were having their lunch in the hall. Four of the six people injured in the blast are teachers and the two other are students.

Two of the three people hurt when the second bomb exploded at 1:20 pm in Beijing University's Nongyuan Dining Hall, the largest on campus, have been identified as cafeteria employees, and the third a student from Haidian Non-residential University who was looking for a job at the time.

Xinhua reported that by that evening, life had basically returned to normal on the two campuses, except that both dining halls have been sealed off by the Beijing police.

## Ancient Hutong Slated for Saving, not Razing

By Iris Miao

A plan to renovate Sanyanjing Hutong near Jingshan Park, one of the 25 protected historical and cultural areas in Beijing, calls not for the wrecking ball, but for careful efforts to restore the ancient street's traditional architecture.

The East-West lane to the northeast of Jingshan East Street in Dongcheng district contains hundreds of pingfang, one-story houses, and is home to 1,800 people. One fifth of the total area of the street is up for renovation.

The plan is the first to center on restoring traditional Beijing courtyard design since 1949. The public can check out and offer opinions on the plan through the website of the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning at [www.bjghw.gov.cn](http://www.bjghw.gov.cn).



By Tony



By Cao Boyuan

## Bride Enjoys Royal Treatment

By Lily Li

Sanlitun bar street went through a romantic time warp last Saturday morning, as bride Zhang Zhujing, seated in a traditional Chinese sedan chair, was carried down the road by eight porters to the accompaniment of a folk

band, two people carrying large red umbrellas and two lion dancers.

Zhang's new husband, Liu Xi, said, "Altogether there are 22 people accompanying the bride. Today is February 22, and January 22 in the lunar calendar. My family wants

the two of us to start a happy life together on this auspicious day with this wonderful wedding ceremony."

The sedan chair, previously used as a movie prop, was borrowed from the Beijing Stage Costume Factory.



Cao Ming's right hand got caught in the taxi's front window.

By Sun Jinglong

## Policeman Dragged by Fleeing Taxi

By Lily Li

Cao Ming, a policeman in the Hujialou team of the Chaoyang Traffic Patrol, was dragged 20 meters down a road by a taxi at 12:30 am on Thursday last week.

The driver of the taxi was arrested the next day.

It was the first case of resistance and assault against a police officer in the capital this year.

While on duty at an intersection on Ritan Lu, Cao saw a red Xiali taxi enter the bike lane to avoid a traffic jam and take right turn. He immediately approached the car and told the driver to show his license through the left front window of the car. However, the car, which had been slowing down, suddenly accelerated.

"I never imagined the driver would take off. I was totally unprepared," Cao told *Beijing Today*.

The policeman was reaching through the car's window and got caught when the driver tried to make his break. Cao ran to keep up, but was eventually dragged forward, though he was able to stay on his feet. When the driver slowed momentarily, Cao pulled his hand from the window and fell to the ground.

"The car pulled me a long way. I was pretty lucky there were no other cars around when I fell down," said the police officer.

He was then rushed to a nearby hospital, where examinations showed he had suffered injuries to his neck, waist, right hand and right knee. The walkie-talkie Cao was carrying in his right hand was also broken.

Li Shuhai, the taxi driver, accelerated away after Cao fell. Through the car's license plate number, other traffic police easily tracked down its owner, Beijing Yinshan Taxi Company. They called the business, and at 4:30 pm the same day, Li turned himself in to the Traffic Bureau to accept punishment, accompanied by leaders of the taxi company.

"I knew the policeman was very close to the car, but I didn't know I was pulling him and knocked him down," said Li. "I tried to get away to avoid the fine for my traffic violation, which would be three points on my license and a fine of 50 yuan to 200 yuan."

Li and his company said they would accept all legal punishment for the incident, which will be set after the seriousness of Cao's injuries is determined.

## Pissed Pigeon Owner Sues for Prize

By Lily Li

Pride and prize money are behind a bird-based lawsuit filed last Thursday in a local court.

Wu Wenxin, owner of two racing pigeons, is suing the Jinglong Pigeon Game Club and Beijing Post Pigeon Association because they disqualified his birds after they placed high in a race held last fall and shorted him a sizeable cash award.

Wu's pigeons took first and thirteenth place in the Young Pigeons Flying Over Shanghaiguan contest organized by the club and the association on October 1 and 2 last year, clocking in at average speeds of nearly 1.2 kilometers and 1 kilometer per minute.

The pigeons' trainer looked forward to a total of 5,500 yuan in cash prizes for his birds' performances, but the race organizers ended up disqualifying his birds on the grounds that no pigeon can fly that fast, and refused to turn over the money.

"I'm suing them not only for breach of contract, but also because they released news that I cheated without any evidence and without my approval," said Wu.

A Beijing Post Pigeon Association spokesman sur-named Huang responded, "Wu's winning pigeon flew 152 meters per minute faster than the second-place bird, which is impossible in this kind of long-distance competition."

Hearings of the case were held this week and will continue next month.

# Sordid Love Triangle Turns Deadly

By Chen Ying

The bodies of two 30-year-old male murder victims were discovered two kilometers apart in Shidu County, Fangshan District on February 16 and 17.

The story behind the killings is straight from the pages of a cheap femme fatale thriller novel.

The two men have been identified as Su Li and He Quan, both from Zhuozhou, Hebei Province. The Fangshan police have determined that He murdered Su on February 15, and then was killed himself the next day by another party.

Investigators quickly marked Su Li's wife, Hu Ling, as a main suspect after the identities of the bodies were determined.

Under interrogation, Hu confessed to the police on Tuesday last week that she hired He to kill her husband, and then she had other men murder He to make sure he would not betray her.

Hu said that after marrying Su, she fell in love with Song Dong, the boss of a coal factory in Zhuozhou, six years ago.

Su found out about his wife's affair, but despite her demands, refused to grant her a divorce.

Last October, Hu asked Song to kill her husband, because she did not want to live with him any more. She told her lover she would break up with him if he did not go through with the murder. Later that month, Su's right arm was broken by a group of Song's friends.

Enraged by the attack, Su told his wife that he was going to buy a gun and kill her lover.

Hu and Song then decided to hire Lu Yong, another friend of Song's, to kill Su. After tracking Su for 20 days, however, Lu never found a good opportunity to do the hit.

The plot then thickened with the entrance of He Quan, another man enamored with Hu, who told her he would help her kill her husband.



# Dudley Do Wrong

By Chen Ying/Sun Ming

Would you help someone if it meant getting into a risky situation? Primary and middle school students in Beijing are about to benefit from new guidelines on this tricky question.

For the last 21 years, students have been presented with a handy pamphlet on moral and behavioral issues entitled "New Students Daily Behavior Regulations". These guidelines have encouraged "daring to struggle" and "doing good deeds, even when risky". But these two points have just been deleted from the new version which will be presented starting from this semester.

The new regulations advise students to report rather than intervene in any deviant behavior, and learn how to protect themselves.

Other cities will soon follow Beijing's lead in amending their moral statutes to suit the times.

Unfortunately, the new regulations contradict a policy implemented in Beijing in 2001 whereby middle school students can obtain 20 points towards their entrance examination to universities if they do a good deed that involves some risk.

The changing of the regulations has aroused heated debate among right-thinking people all over the country.

Some people think it's a sign of social advancement, while others think it's a moral copout.

Should the words "Do good deeds, even when risky" be deleted from the students regulations? Opinions follow:

**Liang Yongping, secretary general, China Foundation for Justice and Courage**

I think this is a kind of social progress.

Our foundation always tries to stay low key in honoring teenag-

ers for their good deeds. Since we started in 1993, we have received many cases nationwide about excellent teenagers, such as young people who have helped in fire fighting and life saving. But we only choose special cases to honor. There's a danger that young children will try to imitate some of the riskier actions. They may also lack the ability to judge the level of danger in an emergency.

The decision to delete the words is similar to a decision made by the local authorities in Guangdong last October banning the mobilization of middle school students to participate in fire fighting.

It's very important to have the right attitude towards good deeds. It's our duty to let students know they should not only have the courage to face difficulties but that they should also be wise.

I think deleting the words needn't necessarily weaken the spirit of doing good deeds. On the contrary, it will promote the spirit of doing good deeds in a more careful and rational way. It's a kind of active and flexible measure to participate in and maintain social order by requiring pupils to report bad behavior or crime instead of involving themselves in it directly.

**Qin Chao, reporter, Star Daily**

I still remember my parents never forgot the word "bravery" as part of the blessing for me on my birthday when I was a child. They wanted me to be a brave boy. As my father told me continuously, I knew to be a brave person I should have a righteous heart. He also said fighting with villains face to face was not the only way to help others. Telling the police or teachers when others need help is also a kind of good deed.

I visited one of my neighbors one day and saw a couple who were worrying about how to get their cat down from the window.

My neighbor told me a mouse had frightened the cat because it had never seen a mouse before. So I understood even a cat needed practice to improve its courage.

I think it's similar with kids. How are they going to be brave if they've never needed to be or been taught about it?

Some would say it would be a tragedy if a child was killed while fighting a fire. That may be true. Maybe the kid would have survived if it had looked out for itself. But at least the child would have had courage.

I think it's good that some words, such as "inform adults" or "understand how to protect yourself", appear in the new student regulations. But I still feel some key words shouldn't be deleted because they don't contradict the new words. They are both based on courage.

**Li Qin, vice-president of Shishi United Middle School**

It's not realistic to advocate students doing good deeds nowadays. Beijing's new regulations reflect the changes in social attitudes to education. Now, most students are the only child in their families. Their ability to look out for themselves is rather weak. They lack the ability to evaluate and anticipate danger. It has become a social problem. Though it's really necessary to cultivate students' sense of justice, the most important thing is that they should know how to be careful. Helping others wisely is of secondary importance. Never encourage them to do what they can't do.

Teaching children how to survive is one of the most important aspects of education. But it needs to be addressed more carefully in contemporary education. For instance, my daughter is glad to help others. One day, she saw an older student ask a younger one for money. To help the younger

student, she gave her own money to the older one. She was happy and thought she had done a good deed when she told me the story. We should teach the kids how to make the right judgment when they become involved in this kind of situation.

**Zhao Xiaoguang, first grader at Beijing No. 1 Middle School**

Even though the new regulations don't encourage us to struggle with bad things and take risks, I still admire brave people who do good deeds without hesitation.

**Lei Kun, a company manager**

The words about taking risks to do good deeds shouldn't be deleted. In my view, there are different degrees of risks. In situations which are not that dangerous, students should come out bravely. For example, if one student was beating another, somebody should try to stop the fight at once. But if someone threatens somebody with a knife or a gun, the situation is very dangerous. In this case, students should report the case first. They shouldn't fight, because there is no use. So according to different situations, students can decide whether to take action.

**Xu Xuemei, PR manager of a foreign owned enterprise**

It's improper to delete these words from the students' regulations. It's more like a kind of spirit to advocate doing good deeds, not a practical instruction.

Besides, how many times are students presented with situations in which they need to take a risk to do a good deed? Very rarely. The idea of doing good deeds even at risk is a kind of inspiration, which can influence people for their whole life if the spirit is instilled in them when they are young.

## SOUND BITES

*"There may well be a time for military action. But at the moment the timetable appears to be determined by the decisions of the President of the United States and not by the logic of events."*

— Chris Smith, a former minister in British Prime Minister Tony Blair's cabinet, speaking during a parliamentary vote on Wednesday over tackling Iraq. Blair won the vote by 393 to 199. Embarrassingly for Blair, 122 of the 199 parliamentarians who disagreed with his approach to the Iraq crisis came from his own party — more than a quarter of the total in parliament — dwarfing any previous internal rebellion he has faced in nearly six years in power.

*"I think this is another example of the regime of North Korea taking escalatory actions in order to gain concessions. We seek a peaceful diplomatic solution, but all options remain on the table."*

— Sean McCormack, the White House National Security Council spokesman regarding reports that North Korea has restarted a nuclear reactor at Yongbyon.

*"Many multinationals find themselves in the unenviable position of educating both local users and local service providers on the value of IT services."*

— Jacqueline Heng, analyst from Gartner, a market-research firm expecting that China's market for information-technology services will grow 18% this year to \$4.9 billion as companies like banks and telecommunications operators spend to upgrade their systems. Despite the fast growth, China remains a challenging market for providers of IT services, as many local companies tend to focus more on buying hardware rather than services.

By Chen Ying

# Who Are You Calling a Dog?

## Nanjing customer criticizes mobile phone greeting words "Hello Chow"

By Lily Li

Red faces all round at China Electronics Corporation Telecom (CECT) this week. The company thought it had hit upon a groovy greeting for its new CECT928 mobile phone.

When people switched it on, the words "Hello Chow" flashed up on the screen. Gimmicks like this are popular in the phone market and the right one can ensure a product's success. But CECT were in for a nasty surprise.

The problem started last week when a woman surnamed Dong decided the words "Hello Chow" were an outrageous insult. She had been curious about the meaning of the words since buying her phone on February 13. So she looked up the word "chow" in the dictionary and was shocked and disturbed to discover it meant "dog raised in China".

The thought of being greeted everyday with the words "Hello, Chinese dog" enraged Ms Dong. "I was speechless. I became quite incoherent," she says. So she took her story to a Nanjing newspaper named *Modern Express* to protest.

It instantly became headline news and anger quickly spread among other Chinese people, especially buyers of the CECT928. Website chat rooms were swamped with comments like, "This is a humiliation for Chinese people!" and, "We must protest at CECT's betrayal of the consumers!"

CECT hurriedly tried to rescue the situation. On February 18, Zhang Hongyu, CFO of CECT's Beijing branch, flew to Nanjing to apologize face to face with Ms Dong. He explained

on behalf of the company that they had never intended to cause offence.

*Beijing Today* looked up the word in the Oxford English Dictionary and found "chow" had two meanings: first, a slang word for food; second, a Chinese breed of long-haired dog.

"We thought it meant 'Hello, lovely pet dog,'" said Zhang, a greeting the company presumably thought would appeal to young consumers. "Greeting words in the screens of mobile phones are very popular nowadays, such as 'Hello the World', or 'Hello Nokia.'"

"It's just like 'Hello Kitty' which means 'Hello, lovely pet cat,'" Zhang continued. "Hello Kitty" is a popular greeting in America and all over the world," he claimed.

Ms Dong was satisfied with the company's apology and accepted Zhang's explanation that the company hadn't considered the potential offense of the word "dog".

On February 19 the company issued a profuse apology, saying "We are a Chinese phone company and it is absolutely not our intention to insult our consumers. The words were just intended as a cute greeting." The company promised to open a toll-free hotline for any questions or complaints and offered a free software upgrade to all customers who were still angry about the words in the greeting.

"Our products are geared towards the high-end market, especially successful business people," said Cen Hanrong, general manager of the marketing and technology department at GrandTech,



CECT928 mobile phone

Photo by Yang Bo

a partner of CECT. "I am sure these educated people will come to a rational understanding of the 'Hello Chow' affair."

The word "chow" is popular among Western people too, according to Barbara Helen, a foreign editor at *China Daily*. "It was one of the 100 most popular names in the United States in 1999 for young parents naming their baby."

Is "Hello Chow" really offensive? Should people get so upset about a certain meaning of a

word? Does this deserve so much attention? Opinions follow:

**Steve Hill, creator of Salsa Pekina**

"Chow" can refer to a type of Chinese dog, or to food. "Ciao" (which is pronounced the same) is also an Italian word meaning hello or goodbye. Sometimes we say "ciao for now", or Italians might say "ciao bella" (hello beautiful) to their girlfriend. Word confusions — such as between British and American English — can be con-

fusing and amusing, but people should not take offence.

**Xu Qian, employee at China Telecom Beijing Research Institute**

I didn't see the mobile phone but CECT is a Chinese company so I don't believe it intended to insult people. A mistake like this doesn't mean the company doesn't love the country. CECT only took the wrong marketing promotion measure, and we shouldn't be too hard on it.

**Tong Ge, administrative assistant at Beijing Zhongli Culture Development Co.**

If it's just a sentence a person says, we can forgive him, because he maybe really doesn't know the meaning of the word "chow". But when a company uses it to attract customers, I regard it as an offense. According to the explanations of the company, they took "chow" as "pet dog" instead of "Chinese dog". What's the difference? Both are dogs! How could a mobile phone company greet its customers by saying "Hello dog"? Calling customers dogs is obviously disrespectful. A public apology is the only thing for CECT to do.

**Hector Mackenzie, foreign editor for China Daily**

Words can often cause confusion — especially when there is some misunderstanding as to their exact meaning. In China, for example, some foreigners take offense if they are referred to by Chinese as *laowai*. The literal translation of the word as I understand it is "old outsider." Yet Chinese people insist they do not intend to cause offense with the use of such a word. Indeed in many parts of China, it is regarded as a term of respect towards foreign people.

I asked people of several different nationalities — including Australians, Canadians, Britons and Americans — as to what their understanding of the word chow was. Two answers were forthcoming: the majority know it as a slang word for "food" while others recognize it as a friendly Italian expression to say "good-bye" to good friends.



By Su Wei

You'd normally think that school was a relatively safe place to be. The odd accident yes, the occasional injury on the sports field and maybe a fight breaking out every now and then. But on the whole, you'd assume children were relatively safe from harm at school.

You'd probably be surprised then to discover that nearly 50 schoolchildren die in China every day. Research conducted by the Ministry of Education in 2001 revealed that 14,000 students below the age of 18 die every year in accidents or fights at school. In the past two years, the number of fatalities has risen to 16,000.

In Shenzhen, Guangdong Province more than 800 accidents were reported from February 2001 to February 2002, over twice that of the same period in the late 1990s.

Last year the Beijing Education Committee said school accidents were the number one cause of fatalities among juveniles, and a key factor behind the injuries they suffer.

Sun Jiangping, a researcher at the Children and Juvenile Research Institute of Beijing University, says around 17 percent of primary and middle school students are prone to violent behavior. In Beijing the proportion is 23 percent, according to research conducted last year by Beijing Disease Prevention and Control Center.

#### Young and dangerous

Liu Wenjia, 18, is one of the 380 inmates at the Juvenile Delinquents Prison in Daxing, Beijing. A few years ago a classmate played a trick on him while they were playing football and Liu was so angry he decided to beat him to death. After murdering his classmate, Liu then buried him. He was sentenced to life.

Wu Ping, 16, was sentenced to three years at the prison last November after he stabbed his schoolmate with a knife on the way home. "I hated her. She spread rumors about my girlfriend. I just wanted to teach her a lesson so I stabbed her. But then she reported me to the police."

Li Baocun, director of the Department of Education at the prison told *Beijing Today* that around 30 percent of the inmates were imprisoned due to violence in which they seriously injured or killed their schoolmates.

There have been similar shocking cases in other provinces.

On March 3, 2001, Li Shun, 16, a student in Chaiyi Village, Yongjia County, Zhejiang Province, killed his classmate after a quarrel while playing table tennis.

Chen Hua, 15, a student in Xiangfen County, Shanxi Province, had had enough of his classmates teasing him, so on December 13, 2001 he threw a bottle of sulphuric acid over them. Thirteen kids had their faces seriously burned.

On May 20 last year, Yang Hua, a thirteen-year-old student in Daxian County, Sichuan Province, killed his roommate, Sun Shuang, with a knife. Yang had fought with Sun that afternoon but only Yang was scolded by the teacher.

#### Violence on TV to blame?

Tong Lihua, vice general secretary of the Research Association of China's Juvenile Delinquents, attributes aggression in school to the violence in modern entertainment culture. "There are too many



# Death in the Playground

fight scenes in films and TV programs, which tempt kids to show their power in front of their classmates in order to get respect," she says. "To their less mature state of mind, the best way to show their power is through violence - hurting their schoolmates."

She cites data from the Beijing Committee for Protection of Minors, which was released at the end of last year. Around 46 percent of Beijing school students said they sometimes wanted to fight or quarrel with others, and 44 percent admitted they had even thought of killing people though they didn't understand why they had such violent impulses.

Tong highlights the cycle of violence. Once someone has been hurt or has hurt someone else, it's easy for them to develop the idea that might is right, that

"strength together with violence brings dignity and respect," she says. "Influenced by these ideas, they are much more likely to hurt others when they perceive there is an opportunity," says Tong.

#### They were just playing

Xiao Wei, 11, from Pudong, Shanghai, says he never wanted to hurt his classmate and friend Xiao Feng. "During the class break, he hugged me tightly. I knew he meant nothing bad. He just wanted to play with me. I never intended to hurt him. I was holding my pen and I just stabbed it back at him. He cried out and I turned back to look at him. There was blood seeping through his fingers."

The pen had struck Xiao Feng in the eye. His vision from his right eye has been reduced to nearly zero. Xiao Wei still remembers everything about the incident.

Xiao Wei and his family were sued by Xiao Feng's family, and had to pay compensation of 3,000 yuan.

One of the most high profile cases of juvenile violence in China happened on November 17, 1999. Fang Ke, an eight-year-old student in Shenzhen City, Guangdong Province, was pushed down onto the ground while playing with his classmate, Yin Xi. He fractured his skull and Fang's parents demanded compensation of 4.25 million yuan. It was principally the figure they sought that drew the media's attention.

Quan Yuhai, judge of Dongcheng People's Court says that such accidents are common among primary school students, and often happen when they're just playing. "They are so young. They can hardly predict the negative effect of their actions."

#### Tragic accidents

The death of a junior middle school student, Wang Xiaoshun in a private school - Taihang Middle School in Quyang County, Hebei Province - was regarded by the Chinese media as one of the most shocking events relating to school accidents in 2001.

On November 25, 2001, Wang Xiaoshun, 15, was climbing around on the stand for a basketball hoop which was lying on the playground. The stand suddenly tipped up and struck Wang on the head. He lost consciousness immediately.

He was taken to the county hospital. Three hours later his heart stopped beating. The family expressed their demand for compensation by placing the body of their dead son in front of his school. So the head of the county showed up and gave Wang's family 40,000 yuan.

On November 13, 2000, the electricity suddenly went off in a middle school in Wutai Town, Shandong Province. Panic ensued and in the rush to get to the doors five students died and 32 were injured.

On March 6, 2001, the collapse of a toilet wall in a primary school in Feidong County, Anhui Province caused the death of one student and injuries to three others.

"These accidents are caused by the school lacking due safety controls," an of-

ficial of the Ministry of Education (who declined to give his name) told *Beijing Today*. The official, who is responsible for solving disputes caused by school accidents, said, "The most common problem is that schools are more worried about students' performance in exams than their safety." He says in most schools, there are only one or two staff responsible for school safety. "Even these people are not full time safety staff as they have other responsibilities."

#### Schools sued

Sixteen-year-old Xiao Wu from Shijingshan District, Beijing has suffered impaired vision in his left eye since being hit by a football during a game. His family sued Xiao Wu's classmate Xiao Liu who kicked the ball and the school.

Shijingshan People's Court decided on

November 28 last year that neither Xiao Liu nor the school was responsible for the injury, according to the Regulations for Handling School Accidents, which were brought into effect on September 1, 2002.

Zhang Yonghua, one of the representatives of the National Congress who proposed the regulations, says they clarify the responsibility among students, their parents and the school and are intended to release schools from the fear of carrying out any outdoor activities. "Some parents believe the school should be the guardian of the students, though civil law stipulates that only the parents are the guardians," he says.

"They consider that as long as the children are sent to school, the school is bound to take all responsibilities relating to any incidents within its grounds, as they have 'given' their children to the school."

The injured students and their parents interviewed by *Beijing Today* believe these regulations enable schools to "waive" their responsibilities.

Li Yao, 14, a middle school student from Weifang City, Shandong Province, was hospitalized for nearly six months after falling from the window of a classroom on the third floor. On April 5, 2001 she tried to pull down the blind but was too short to reach it. So she climbed up to the window, which was open at that time. She fell out of it and down to the ground, injuring her skull.

Her family sued the school for compensation as well as medical expenses which they said would be more than 700,000 yuan. The Secondary People's Court of Weifang decided the school should pay 40 percent of the costs.

The school principal said he agreed with the decision but the father, according to Xinhua News Agency, asked how the family would be able to afford the further 400,000 yuan in medical expenses.

Yu Hongwei, a judge at the court, said the expense caused by such accidents can hardly be afforded by an ordinary family, especially in a society lacking sufficient social welfare. "There is insurance for workers who are injured at work. But for students, there is no insurance."

A member of the Beijing Education Committee, who asked not to be named, said the parents' main aim was to deal with their children's medical expenses and provide their future social security. "The regulations only superficially clarify the responsibilities of the school, the students and the parents but fails to solve the basic problems caused by school accidents."

(Pseudonyms are used for the students involved in school accidents.) Photo / Tony Stone

## Accidents for which the school has no responsibility:

Natural disasters such as earthquakes; accidents outside school; diseases, physical conditions or abnormal psychological states; students committing suicide; accidents taking place in violent or risky sports; accidents on the way to or from school as well as when having left school without permission.

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# Should Japan Pay?

By Sun Ming

The High Court in Tokyo is about to hear the case of Japan's biological warfare in China during World War II.

The plaintiffs are demanding an apology and compensation from the Japanese Government. The fact the case has finally made it to one of the highest courts in Japan is a personal victory for Wang Xuan who has been campaigning for recognition of the issue for the past eight years.

Using her mastery of Chinese, English and Japanese, 51-year-old Wang works as the head, organizer and interpreter of the plaintiffs' group of 180 people who are both survivors and relatives of deceased victims of the Imperial Japanese Army's germ warfare.

## Partial victory in 2002

On August 27 last year, the Tokyo District Court ruled that Japan had indeed waged germ warfare in China, a form of conflict banned by the 1925 Geneva Convention.

It was the first time a Japanese court had recognized this. The claim that germ warfare was carried out by the infamous Unit 731 and other units of the Imperial army during the 1937-1945 war in China had long been officially denied.

But the court refused any compensation or an apology to the Chinese victims who asked for 10 million yen — about \$84,000 — for each of the plaintiffs.

"There is no international law enabling individuals to sue for war-time damages," said Judge Koji Iwata in the court. The court said compensation issues had already been settled under postwar treaties between Japan and China.

Three days later, the plaintiff group filed an appeal to the Tokyo High Court.

"It is absurd that the Japanese government doesn't have to take



*"I said in court that we brought the lawsuit in order to remember all the victims who died from the germ warfare and we would fight for justice to the end."*

— Wang Xuan

any responsibility, even though the ruling confirmed biological warfare had taken place," said Wang.

"Even though China's government announced in the 1970s that it wouldn't ask for war compensation, Japan should pay compensation to victims. We are the representatives of civilians," Wang told *Beijing Today*.

## Investigating germ warfare

In 1995, Wang learnt from *Japan Times* that two Japanese had reported their investigation of victims in Chongshan village, Yiwu County, Zhejiang Province, at an international seminar about the brutal acts carried out by Japan's Unit 731.

Wang also discovered three villagers were filing a suit in a Japanese court, demanding compensation for their wartime sufferings.

"I was very interested. Yiwu is my hometown," said Wang who called the newspaper at once.

At that time, Wang had been living in Japan with her husband for almost eight years. The couple had finished their studies, and started upon a peaceful life.

"Germ warfare took eight lives from my family. When I was a little girl, my father told me how the Japanese had spread bubonic

plague and cholera bacteria in Chongshan village. I still remember the look on his face," she says.

In 1942, a Japanese plane flew over Chongshan Village and dropped a deadly load onto the people below.

One month later, a Japanese army unit, who claimed they could treat the patients, came to the village. They took the patients to a remote place and began to conduct a grisly form of human vivisection upon their living bodies to find out the effects of the biological warfare.

Within two months, 403 villagers had died from the plague and the experiments.

Unit 731 had grown fleas in a bathtub, mixed them with wheat to attract disease-carrying rats, infected them with bubonic plague, and then airdropped them over Zhejiang and Hunan between 1940 and 1942.

"People died in hours or days, their bodies swollen and black. Those who came to their funerals often took the disease home with them," said Ding De Wang, 69, who testified that his father died in convulsions two days after being exposed to the plague. At the time, Ding was 8.

## Going back to the courthouse

Wang said she felt she had to do something. In 1995 she joined a non-governmental investigation group in Japan which was looking into germ warfare.

"We were overwhelmed by the fact that so many people were affected by the germ warfare and that the rest of the world knew so little about it," said Wang.

Wang became the head of the plaintiff group in 1997 when they brought their lawsuit to Tokyo District Court, demanding an apology and compensation.

Among the plaintiff group, most are from Yiwu, Ningbo, Qu-

zhou, Dongyang, Jiangshan in Zhejiang Province, and Changde in Hunan Province.

The plaintiff group claims that at least 300,000 people were killed by germ warfare though Wang says the number could be as high as one million. Unit 731 operated in China from 1937-1945 and conducted experiments on more than 3,000 people including Chinese, Koreans and Russians.

Wang appeared in Tokyo District Court for the first time on August 11, 1997.

"I couldn't help weeping as I gave my testimony. I couldn't even read my notes clearly," says Wang. "There were three judges and I noticed two of them were crying also."

"I said in court that we brought the lawsuit in order to remember all the victims who died from the germ warfare and we would fight for justice to the end."

Wang attended court hearings 27 times between 1997 and 2002. "Most of the time I was the only plaintiff in the court," she said.

Wang admitted that she felt lonely. "I had hoped Chinese people would be more interested. But it seems many of the Chinese students in Japan were too busy to attend the sessions."

## Japan's conscience

"If one more person knows about the germ warfare atrocities, we are one step closer to our victory," says Wang. The plaintiffs are gradually getting more attention from China and from around the world.

Wang still lives in Himeji, Japan and works for a company in the city. Her job is researching Chinese business.

"I haven't been put under any pressure at work. My boss knows my lawsuit against his country," said Wang. "But he is very polite to me. Actually he is one of my supporters."

Wang Peigen, the secretary of



Wang with 96-year-old Zhu Wenda who witnessed Japan's germ warfare program in Yiwu County. Zhu died in February 2002. Photo by Tan Jin

the plaintiff group, told *Beijing Today* that 234 Japanese lawyers had offered to help them without pay. There have also been donations from non-governmental organizations which have reached five million yen in the past eight years.

Wang has also received help from Yoshio Shinozuka, 77, a former member of Unit 731. He repented his participation in the unit and volunteered to testify in court. He told of the human experimentation that went on at the unit's Harbin headquarters in northeastern China.

## Career sidelined

"I know that most of the survivors are getting older and older. Some have already passed away during the lawsuit," says Wang who on several occasions has led groups of hundreds of old survi-

vors between China and Japan to file their case.

Wang is now seen by many people as a heroine in her battle with a formidable government. She was named one of the "Top Ten most influential Chinese in 2002".

Since the plaintiff group was assembled without government support, Wang has had to pay out of her own pocket for much of the investigation.

"My husband gives the most help," she said, "since he tolerates a wife who is always away."

"This is something all Chinese people should care about. If we want to get justice, we need support. I don't just mean lip service, what's the meaning of that? But if Chinese people really got behind us, we might succeed. We've already come a long way."

# Trading Buddha for Bucks ?

## Theme park housing replica of Bamiyan Buddha investigated

By Ivy Zhang

A 37-meter replica of one of the Buddhas of Bamiyan, destroyed by the Taliban two years ago, stands in a park in China, covered in blue plastic wrapping.

It has been declared illegal and the park which built it is being investigated following a report in a newspaper claiming the park had built its replica within the core protective area of the tombs of Mahaoya, state-protected cultural relics.

The park, named Oriental Buddha Capital, is about 1,000 meters west of the Leshan Giant Buddha, the world's largest statue of Buddha standing at 71 meters and part of the UNESCO world heritage.

The park decided to build its replica after the two Buddhas of Bamiyan in Afghanistan, one about 53-meters-high and the other 37-meters-high, were destroyed in March 2001.

The new Bamiyan Buddha was carved in Leshan, Sichuan province within a year.

"The Bamiyan Buddha is illegal. But whether the park is illegal or not, we haven't decided yet," said an official from Sichuan Cultural Relics Protection Administration who declined to give his name.

"In May 2001, papers were issued to ban the building of replica because it violates the nation's Cultural Relics Protection Law."

## The park and the Bamiyan Buddha

Oriental Buddha Capital Stock Holding Company started constructing the park in 1992 and opened it to the public two years later.

More than 300 people helped build the park, including 20 professors from Sichuan Art Insti-

tute and about 200 technicians. The total investment was 100 million yuan.

According to Liang Enming, chairman of the company, the park was intended to develop China's Buddhism culture.

"Chinese Buddhism culture is only complete with the convergence of Buddhism, Confucius and Taoism," Liang said. "I felt that the Leshan Giant Buddha was too isolated. All the world-famous statues of Buddha are surrounded by other representations of Buddha, like the moon surrounded by stars. We wanted to expand and develop this culture, based around the Leshan Giant Buddha."

But not everyone believes what Liang claims. Guo Zhan, director of the World Heritage Management Division, State Cultural Relics Administration, said it was only a personal scheme of Liang's to implement this project. He said Buddha should more properly stand alone, needing no companions.

"Otherwise, its authenticity is compromised," he said. "And to build a large artificial park in a natural scenic spot like Leshan is sure to spoil the vegetation and physiognomy of the area."

The replica of the Bamiyan Buddha was built from May 2001 to February 2002 at a cost of eight million yuan.

Liang said he wanted to build the statue because of "our respect for Buddhism and desire to save the world's heritage from destruction." He also said the project to replicate the statue had received "massive media coverage from home and abroad in support of the building".

## Controversial site

*Southern Weekend*, a Guang-



Dodgy erection covered up

Photo by Wang Jingchun

zhou-based newspaper, published a story titled "Ridiculous! Bamiyan Giant Buddha Revived at Leshan" last Thursday, which drew nationwide attention to the park.

The story claimed the Bamiyan replica had been built "within the core protection area of the Mahaoya Tombs."

The 2,000-year-old Mahaoya Tombs were built in China's Han dynasty and include some of the world's earliest stone statues of Buddha. There are more than 500 individual tombs in the area near Leshan Giant Buddha.

"To protect the historic site, the state set up Leshan Maha-

oya Tomb Museum 18 years ago. But due to financial constraints, the museum only includes seven tombs. There are 500 other tombs scattered among the hills nearby.

In 1989, the Sichuan government appropriated about 49 hectares of land as protective land for the Mahaoya Tombs. In 1994, the Oriental Buddha Capital park was given permission to be built on the site, albeit outside the core protection area. In 2001, the Bamiyan Buddha was built within the core protective area," the paper reports.

"If the park is in the protected area of the tombs and they

failed to get a permit, it is illegal from the perspective of China Cultural Relics Protection Law," said Chai Xiaoming, director of the Cultural Relics Protection Division of the State Cultural Relics Administration.

Chai said they had already requested Sichuan authorities to look into this case. An investigation team went to the site Wednesday. The result has not been decided yet.

Liang served as deputy director of Leshan Buddha Relics Management Committee for six years from 1986 to 1992.

He says the local government allocated 49 hectares of land to the committee in 1989. But the government took it back four years later in 1993 as the land remained undeveloped. In 1993, the government let it to the company for a term of 40 years, according to Liang.

He said the core protective area of the tombs is only 0.07 hectares of land surrounded by a wall and his park is outside the wall.

"How could we put a 37-meter-high Buddha within 0.07 hectares of land? There used to be a worn-out hospital on the land covering an area of 10,000 square meters. It is us who spent big bucks to move the hospital away last year and plant trees in the area."

## Damaging the heritage?

*Southern Weekend* reports that the Leshan Buddha Management Committee approached Leshan Culture Bureau, the company and the local authorities after the Bamiyan project began in May 2001, complaining the project was damaging the Mahaoya Tombs.

The committee claimed the project had caused great damage to the tombs and that the use of heavy vehicles and bulldozers had shaken the coffin chambers within the museum.

"The committee tried to prevent the illegal construction many times in writing or orally but all their efforts were in vain," the report continues.

Liang says he never used bulldozers but only hand-pulled carts

and says the statue was built far away from the coffin chambers.

In return, he attacked the committee. "The committee has its own problems with protecting relics. They tore down the side rooms of Lingyun Temple and the ancient pavilion and side rooms of Dongpo House just beside the Leshan Giant Buddha within the core protective areas. They are also doing illegal things," said Liang.

## Making money in the name of heritage?

Starting from the end of last year, a sign reading "Oriental Buddha Capital - World Heritage Protection Area" hung at the entrance of the park.

After *Southern Weekend* covered the story, Liang took the sign down.

"That was my fault. The UNESCO officials did visit and examine the park but did not evaluate it," he said. "But I think we are within the range of three kilometers from the Leshan Giant Buddha. The Leshan Buddha occupies a core UNESCO protective area and any place within three kilometers is also protected."

The newspaper reported that many visitors complained about the park and about 400 tourists were misled into going to the park when they had wanted to visit the Leshan Buddha. The paper accused the park of "making profit in the less-regulated tourism market using the name of Leshan Giant Buddha."

Liang pointed out that the park was opened two years before UNESCO listed the Leshan Buddha as part of the world heritage. He said neither the Leshan Buddha park nor his Oriental Buddha Capital park are profitable.

"We still owe the bank 10 to 20 million yuan," Liang said.

"The park cost a lot of money but all it's got is fake antiques. It is of no great value," said Guo Zhang, the official from the state authority. "It is in poor taste and is totally business-driven. In terms of spreading culture and promoting tourism, it is not a good project."





Wang contributes to the cultural life of residents in his community.

By Zhao Pu

Think of China's neighborhood committees and the image of the old woman sitting on a doorstep, keeping an eye out for undesirable elements will probably come to mind.

But times have changed. Some of the pressures of modern society, such as unemployment and rising crime rates, have required rather more direct involvement in the community. Recent reforms have enticed younger people into the job of community services, such as 39-year-old Wang Fuzhu.

Three years ago, Wang took off the military uniform he had worn for 18 years and walked into one of the neighborhood committees in Beijing. Soon he was busy fixing gates, prizing apart outraged mothers and furious daughters-in-law and finding new boyfriends for lonely divorcees.

"I didn't expect I'd have such a wide range of tasks," he says. It was all a long way from the PLA but he did well enough to be named a model community servant by the government.

#### Role change

In 1999, the government decided to downsize the army by 500,000 soldiers and the military unit Wang had served in for 18 years was disbanded. He was reluctant to retire, and to leave his familiar life in the army behind.

There was also the problem of finding a new job. He didn't have any special technical skills or higher educational background, so Wang was worried.

He went to the Beijing Personnel Administration Center near the Forbidden City and registered in its personnel database. "It was a big surprise for me when several institutions contacted me right after I registered, saying they wanted to employ someone with a military background," he says.

Initially, Wang worked for a biotech company and then a construction company but only for a few months as he didn't like the working environment he found there. In spring 2000, while Wang was wondering which kind of job would suit him better, the Beijing government released an advertisement recruiting community servants.

Wang applied and was given a book named *Neighborhood Committee Work Introduction* as material for the enrollment test. He read it several times, but still Wang couldn't understand what the neighborhood committee actually did. "I had never known anything about them," he says.

Wang succeeded in the interview

and was enlisted by the government as one of the community servants in Beijing. He was assigned to Baligiao Neighborhood Committee, which took care of more than 500 households. When Wang had been a staff officer in the army, he had over 100 soldiers in his command; now he had 2,000 people in his community to look after.

At the beginning, Wang was taken aback by the scope of his new job. "People came to us with literally any kind of problem," he says. A nursery maid complained she had not been fully paid by her employer who was not happy with her service; somebody's bathroom fitment workers did a shoddy job; water was dropping from an upstairs balcony onto the drying clothes downstairs; a mother and daughter-in-law started a family war; some parents felt their sons were maltreating them...

Some of these problems were easy to fix as there were regulations or contracts involved. But others, like family disputes, required more tact. As it was hard to judge who was right or wrong Wang decided to rely on gentle and patient persuasion.

#### Right, you 'orrible lot!

The locals soon realized that things were going to be different with this former soldier in charge. Wang's community had been plagued by petty crime such as theft of bicycles and even cars. So he worked out a plan to strengthen the security system. "The two gates of our community should be closed all day long, manned by 24-hour security guards who will open them for residents. Suspicious strangers won't be let in," his plan read.

Wang pasted his security plan on the ad board outside his office. Most of the neighbors supported his idea. That was the first "big measure" Wang carried out in his community. But several days after the strict plan was implemented, people began to complain. "Where does he think this is, his barracks? Why doesn't he ask us to stand at attention when we report to come in?" they said.

The plan certainly affected the convenience of local teenagers. The amateur security guards often sloped off at night so the young folk returning late had to climb over the gates to get home.

One morning, when Wang arrived at his office, he found some old people gathering at the back gate of the



"The community is my home," Wang writes on the ad board.



Wang gives a meeting for applicants of the future Taiji group.



Writing new year couplets in office



Wang coordinates with local security guards.

Photos by Zhuang Jian

community. He approached them to see what had happened and found the iron door had been ripped down. His first reaction was anger but he just lifted the heavy door and carried it to the lock fixer. "I decided I would just fix it. Next time it got broken I would fix it again," he says.

Wang bowed to some of the local's complaints by correcting the work attitude of the security guards. The strict plan did at least succeed in putting a stop to bicycle theft.

#### Dangers

Being a community servant, Wang wasn't only dealing with small disputes. Some of the people he dealt with were quite dangerous.

One day in summer 2001, Wang was working with two colleagues in his office. Suddenly, the door was kicked open and a drunk man holding a kitchen knife in hand stumbled in. The man shouted to them, "I'm back now, you guys better find a good job for me or I'll make trouble for you."

Wang knew the man, who had just been released after 10 years' imprisonment in Xinjiang. He was living with his old parents now in the community. Nobody wanted to employ him because of his record. So he poured out his frustration and resentment at the neighborhood committee.

Wang's two female colleagues were frightened by the man. Wang answered him calmly, "you'd better drop that knife and talk like a man. I've been a soldier for 18 years, you think you can frighten me with that knife?" The man sat down and repeated his requirement. "We can help you to find a job. But you'd better improve your behavior first!" said Wang.

Wang found the oil company the man worked with before he was imprisoned and persuaded the manager to give him a job to feed his family.

Another jobless man in his community also threatened Wang during his application for welfare. He had applied for several years, but was never granted it. Wang felt he didn't meet the criteria for welfare, which was meant for those who cannot work. "He can work, he is just lazy," says Wang.

After being rejected again by Wang in his application in 2000, the man spread rumors about Wang and threatened to beat him up. Some of the residents warned Wang to watch

out for the roguish man. One day when Wang was having lunch in a small restaurant, the man brought two of his friends to teach him a lesson, but was stopped from doing anything by angry residents.

Such threats are not rare in Wang's daily work. Irrational people vent their anger and complaints to the neighborhood committee. "A 50-year-old divorced woman even asked me to find her a new boyfriend. She came to my office every day to check my progress, and shouted at me if she thought I wasn't taking it seriously," he says.

#### New start

Wang's efficiency proved a sharp contrast to that of his superannuated predecessors. A local dump, known as the 'garbage hill', had been piling up for years and had become a big headache for residents in the community. Wang organized some volunteers and cleared it up in half a month.

When he first reported to work, people complained to him that there was no bus stop near their community, the residents had to walk for 20 minutes to get to the bus stop. Wang contacted the department in charge of public transportation and wrote to the People's Congress right away. The problem was solved within two months.

At the beginning of this year Wang was transferred to a new community. The residents in his first one were sorry to see him go, especially aged people. To enrich their life, Wang had arranged dozen of trips around the city and to Tianjin for the old folks, as well as a number of entertainment activities and competitions.

The new community in Ding-fuzhuang will be a new start for Wang. There are nearly 2,000 households and over 5,000 residents under his new neighborhood committee. Compared with the previous community, security and sanitation here are much better. "It seems that I don't need to guard the gates and clear the garbage here, so I'll probably focus on enhancing the cultural life of our residents," says Wang.

In this year's annual plan, Wang will build a Taiji group and will enlarge the singing group in the new community. "People have complained to me that there is no exercise place in our community." So Wang will write to the People's Congress again.



# Recording a Vanishing Heritage

By Iris Miao

Last Tuesday marked a crucial and exciting moment in the story of China's folk cultural heritage. A project titled Saving Chinese Folk Cultural Heritage was officially launched at the Great Hall of the People.

Over the next ten years, a massive survey will be carried out to map the overall status of China's folk cultural heritage. On completion, the results of the survey, which will cover the three categories of folk customs, folk literature, and folk art, will be published.

The first step is to determine exactly what we have in terms of folk cultural heritage, says writer Feng Jicai, chairman of the China Folk Artists Association and the driving force behind the project, and to record everything, "as big as an ancient village to as small as an embroidered pouch" in writing, photographs and videos.

The death of an old folk artist with no apprentices to perpetuate his or her legacy, a piece of folk architecture demolished to make way for a highway or modern apartment block ... It is no exaggeration to say that a little bit of China's folk culture vanishes with every passing minute.

"We just cannot wait one minute more to take action," says Feng.

## Better late ...

The word "Save," in the context of the project bears a sad, even ironic, connotation. Take Spring Festival pictures printed using traditional woodblock techniques, for example. Recent losses are uncountable and non-refundable.

Zhuxianzhen County in Kaifeng, Henan was once one of the four major production areas for these brightly colored decorative images, along with Yangliuqing near Tianjin, Taohuawu near Suzhou and Yangjiapu near Weifang.

According to Yao Jingtang, director of the Kaifeng Spring Festival Picture Research Association, in June 1988, there were 11 artists accomplished in the art, all over the age of 60. By July 2001, seven of them had passed away.

As for Yangliuqing, where



The once ubiquitous blue printed cloth has a centuries-long history. Top left: tracing the design onto the undyed cloth. Top right: the finished product. Bottom left: turning the cloth in the dye. (Langshantun, Shandong)

making Spring Festival pictures was once a sideline for virtually every household, those still involved in the trade today can be counted on one hand. Feng Jicai finished a survey at Yangliuqing last month, in which he found only one family still using the traditional woodblock technique.

Although several new workshops have been established, they were set up in response to the recent growth of tourism, and the pictures are created using modern printing methods rather than the traditional woodblock technique.

## Funding the major problem

Although the project has attracted state level support, so far no details regarding funding have been released.

Feng has been working to get the project off the ground for a year and a half, talking to officials at all levels and potential sponsors, yet after 18 months, "The result is just a press conference at the Great Hall of the People," says Feng with disappointment, "it is far from satisfactory."

Feng describes himself as an

idealist and a perfectionist. "I feel like I'm a Don Quixote," he says, "though I'm full of enthusiasm in public, always in the front line of the battle, I'm actually a pessimist at heart."

So what will keep his enthusiasm burning over the ten years it will take to complete the project? "Love, love for our culture," he says simply.

## Recording is a way of protecting

At the heart of Feng's pessimism, he says, is his feeling

of powerlessness. The lifetime of skills and knowledge in the hands and mind of an aging artist might be lost if there is no apprentice; a beautiful ancient village might be transformed almost overnight into a hideous imitation of a Roman garden, and he can do nothing.

The focus of this project is to record the status of the various aspects of the cultural heritage as vividly as possible, while they still exist, and to collect what still can be found of the vestiges of those that have already vanished.

So what can be done after ten years, when the survey is complete, the books are published, to prevent those remaining living folk cultures from disappearing too?

"We have to rely on the government then," says Feng, "anyway, recording is a way of protecting, at least we will have an idea of how we once lived."

## Volunteer project

The China Folk Artist Association has issued a survey brochure, which explains the huge scope the project covers, and a VCD containing an example of a survey videoed at a small mountain village called Hougou in Shanxi Province. The association encourages volunteers to take the brochure with them and go into the field to carry out investigation.

After the media coverage following last Tuesday's press conference, many people contacted the association, volunteering to participate. "We cherish the enthusiasm," says Feng, "yet enthusiasm is not enough." It also requires expertise and painstaking fieldwork.

"We've already set up a special office for the project," says Xiang Yunju, secretary of the association, "step by step we will offer uniform training to all participants, experts, folk culture scholars, students, and workers around the country."

There will be a conference on execution of the project late next month, and a law on saving and protecting folk cultural heritage is currently under discussion.

## A Nostalgic Look at Old Beijing

By Iris Miao

Wei'er (味儿) is a useful word in Beijing dialect. It can be interpreted as "flavor," "characteristic," or "ambience," as in the context of "jingwei'er wenhua," meaning "flavor of Beijing culture," but who can clearly define this flavor?

When it is used to describe a person, as in "you wei'er," it is a little more difficult to translate. Generally, it means the person has some sort of "special" quality. Artist Yang Xin could be described as quite "you wei'er," with the publication of the third book in his Beijing trilogy last month.

The three books, *Read Hutong*, about life in Beijing's lanes, published in 2001, *Old Trades of Beijing*, published last year, and the most recent *Outside the Qianmen Gate*, feature detailed color pencil drawings and commentaries by Yang, complete with English translations.

Yang says he was initially motivated simply by a desire to summarize his wayward childhood memories, but his love for the "flavor of Beijing ambience" led him to accomplish something rather more substantial.

*Outside the Qianmen Gate* concentrates on the culture of the southern part of Beijing, the oldest part of the city. The old stores such as Tongrentang Chinese Medicine Store, Neiliansheng Shoe Store are there, along with scenes from the old Tianqiao theatre district, including vaudeville and opera troupes, foods, the market, scenery and customs.

Yang says writing the captions for each of the 110 pictures took him over half a year, much longer than he actually spent on the drawings themselves. "Those who love the old Beijing will see history and culture through my paintings," says Yang.



Tianqiao theater scene by Yang Xin

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By Liu Qiongxiang

The Xiangshan Primary School, a small school almost an hour drive from downtown Guangzhou, was the unlikely host of a collective art event last month. From January 18 to 23, British sculptor Antony Gormley mobilized the school's students and the whole community to take part in one chapter of his on-going international work titled *Asian Field*. In all, over 300 children, parents and other local residents got their hands dirty crafting 120,000 small clay figurines under Gormley's guidance.

Before actual creation began, Gormley laid two ground rules: every figure should be about as long as a human hand and be portrayed standing and looking up at the sky. To give the impromptu artists plenty of room, the school's playground was made a temporary studio and display area. One hundred tons of clay went into creating the army of small sculptures.

During the event, the schoolyard was filled with a huge variety of people, from curious teenagers to countrywomen in their holiday best, older men to silent poets, cameramen angling for the best view, Chinese artists speaking English, foreigners speaking Chinese, and officials of the school and local government overseeing the whole thing. Without question, the happiest contingent was the kids and their parents, sitting on the playground together kneading and molding clay under the beating sun.

Aside from its artistic merit, this event was an interesting study of human behavior. The masses went through a few stages during the whole event, as everyone seemed nervous at first, and early creations turned out looking very similar. As they warmed up, though, the amateur artists started working in their own ideas, and the pieces showed far more originality. And then, on the last day of the project, the collective mind converged again, and most figurines shared a common look.

Throughout the event, Gormley tirelessly worked the crowd, offering his sculpting assistants encouragement and asking them questions.

He asked two women, "What do you think your figurines are like?" "A Buddhisattva," said one, while the other answered, "a mobile phone." Their mentor immediately took out his own cell phone to compare to the figure. "Which is better, a Buddhisattva or a mobile phone?" he asked the women. One quickly answered, "A mobile phone, of course. It can reach all over the world."

This was just one chapter in *Field*, a long-term project Gormley has conducted in communities around the world since 1989. China's contribution is the largest ever, generating three times more figures than any of its predecessors. After they were finished, all the tiny sculptures were fired in a large kiln to protect and preserve them.

Starting in March, the clay figurines will go public at a series of exhibitions held in an underground parking lot in Guangzhou, the National Museum of Chinese History in Beijing, a rice storage warehouse in Pudong, Shanghai and an abandoned factory in Chongqing. During these shows, the tiny sculptures will take up all the space, and visitors will only be able to see them from the doors or other outside vantage points. Gormley said he has not decided on the final fate of the figurines, but has indicated he is inclined to return them in the end to the earth.

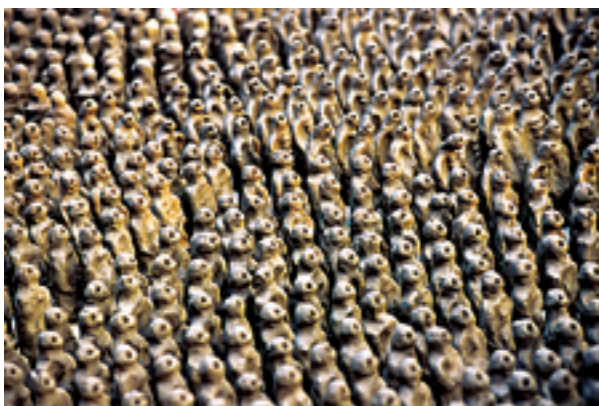
Photos by Zeng Han / Translated by Zhang Huan



Antony Gormley and his work Field



Eleven-year-old Jiang Hengzhi and his final products



The mini terracotta army stands at attention



Gormley shares a laugh with two volunteer sculptors

## Artists in Space

By Qiao Luqiang

Red Gate Gallery is currently host to the "Space on the Move" exhibition, featuring nearly 30 works, including oil and acrylic paintings, wood block and mixed media pieces.

Beijing artist Xin Yi's mixed media work *Crossroad* vividly addresses the confusion that can arise during transactions across cultures and traditions, in part depicted by the ancient Chinese characters for North, South, East and West.

Feng Feng, another artist in the show, has a background in lasers and science, perhaps the reason why geometric images frequently appear in his paintings. His acrylic on canvas painting *Beijing City* turns the huge and complicated heart of Beijing into a simple, flat image made up of several square color masses. Faint figures and Chinese characters are stamped and engraved on the background of the work.

The show's curator, Xu En-



Beijing City by Xin Yi

Photo by Zhuang Jian

cun, said, "To these artists, searching for new spatial and linguistic forms is an untiring and joyful process. They move from one space to another, from one type of communication to another, by shifting between various forms of manipulating reality and by charging headlong towards the development of aesthetic value and form."

**Where:** Red Gate Gallery, Dongbianmen Watchtower, Chongwenmen **When:** February 22 - March 9 **Telephone:** 6525 1005 **Website:** redgategallery.com

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加裕华装饰



# Cats to Stalk Beijing Stage

By Dong Nan

Following its stunning success in Shanghai, at least in terms of pre-sales, Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Cats* will open in Beijing on May 18 for a 72-performance season.

General manager of China Performing Arts Agency Zhang Yu made the announcement last week.

More than 65 million people have seen *Cats* in nearly 300 theaters around the world since it premiered in London in 1981. Due to open in Shanghai on March 28, the musical has already topped www.piao.com.cn's ticket sales.

It will be the first opportunity for Beijingers to experience Webber's best known work in its entirety, and the production's success seems assured, if the reception a concert of popular songs from his musicals at the Great Hall of the People last September is anything to go on.

"Seventy-two performances is a record number for the Beijing stage, and we are determined to stick it out even if the box office returns are not good," said Zhang Yu, "I am not sure yet whether all the tickets can be sold, but I have confidence in the appeal of *Cats*."



## Top Female Musicians Celebrate Their Festival

By Nebula Dong

Noted female musicians Yu Lina, Bao Huiqiao and Min Huifen will give a concert to celebrate International Women's Day on the eve of March 8.

At the age of 18, violinist Yu Lina won instant acclaim with her premiere performance of the violin concerto *The Butterfly Lovers*. Since that night 44 years ago, her name has been inseparable from the immortal piece.

Pianist Bao Huiqiao rose to fame with her rendition of *The Yellow River*, a concerto interpreted by numerous Chinese pianists. Bao's unique style always wins rousing applause.

Min Huifen is an internationally renowned Erhu player. Former conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, the late Eugene Ormandy praised her as "a true musical genius," and Japanese conductor Ozawa Seizi once said he was moved to tears by her performance of *Water of Rivers and Lakes*.

The three distinguished musicians will perform their representative works, accompanied by the China Film Orchestra Symphony.

**Where:** Cultural Palace of Nationalities Theater **When:** March 7, 19:30 **Admission:** 80-480 yuan



Yu Lina



Bao Huiqiao



Min Huifen

## Monologue Wins Over Audience

By Nebula Dong

Sitting in the center of the large stage, talking to white puppets, monologist Qin Yan performed *Wo Ai Tai Gang* (I Love Carrying Poles), from February 18 to 23 at Beibingmashi Theater.

*Wo Ai Tai Gang*, by Liu Shen, is the tragic story of an elderly coffin bearer, Guan Dachen, who has witnessed a century of history. With his coffin carrying poles, the legendary old man had carried the coffins of many famous people, including eunuchs and members of the royal family of the Qing Dynasty, a democratic leader in the 1920s' and a modern TV star.

While a few audience members found the performance less than riveting and left their seats halfway through, most people were captivated by the sarcastic language and extraordinary talent of the sole actor, Qin Yan.

"Thanks to the experience of many years, I have the courage and capacity to stand on the stage by myself," said the 49-year-old actor, "It would really have been unimaginable for me to do such a thing ten years ago."



## Chen Lin Releases New Album

By Dong Nan

Ten years after her debut *I Can Never Understand Your Tenderness*, pop star Chen Lin released her sixth album *Don't Want to Cheat Myself* on Friday last week.

Unlike the soft, tender love songs of the past, the new record combines elements of techno, acid rock and pop.

Renowned pop and rock musicians from China, South Korea and Japan, including Fang Wenshan and Qu Shicong have lent their talents to recording Chen's new album.

Describing her new style as "fashionable music," Chen commented, "I believe my songs tell the universal feelings of our generation, rather than my own love, pain and career."

Chen's 2001 album, *Let Love Be* sold an astonishing 58,000 units, and her record company, Star Word Discs, hopes the latest one will hit one million.



### WORLDWIDE



#### Norah Jones Sweeps Grammy Awards

The soft, jazzy voice of Norah Jones inviting listeners to *Come Away With Me* swept up eight Grammy Awards at the top music industry awards that were punctuated by a smattering of low key anti-war protests.

Jones, 23, nominated personally for five awards and tipped by many music critics to dominate the 45th annual Grammys, did just that by taking home the golden gramophone statuettes for Album of the Year, Best New Artist, Record of the Year for the single *Don't Know Why*, Best Pop Vocal Album and Best Female Pop Vocal Album. (Reuters)

In a complaint filed in Manhattan Supreme Court, the former British Army commander claimed he lost the job after an article ran in January in the *London Daily Mirror* saying Fox hired him to report from the Persian Gulf for a salary of \$159,000.

The international media picked up the story, and headlines appeared ridiculing Fox for hiring Hewitt as a correspondent. (Reuters)



George Clooney

#### Actor George Clooney Frustrated by US War Drive

American actor George Clooney stepped up his criticism of George W. Bush's administration on Sunday, saying he feared a war against Iraq was inevitable but would ultimately only lead to more violence.

"America's policies frustrate me," Clooney said in a German television program. "I think a war against Iraq is as unavoidable as it is senseless. I think it's coming. But I also think the real danger is going to be what happens after it." (Reuters)

#### Day-Lewis Favorite to Scoop Oscar for Best Actor

British actor Daniel Day-Lewis was tipped Monday as the favorite to win the Oscar for best actor following his success at Sunday's Bafta awards for his role in *Gangs of New York*.

Leading British bookmaker Ladbrokes said Day-Lewis, who won best actor at the British film awards, has replaced former frontrunner Jack Nicholson as the clear favorite for the coveted award with odds of ten-elevenths. Nicholson was nominated for his part in *About Schmidt*. (Reuters)



Daniel Day-Lewis

#### Polanski Victim Says Judge Oscar Favorite on Merit

The woman at the heart of a 1970s' sex scandal that derailed the career of Roman Polanski said she had no "hard feelings" toward the director and that his actions 25 years ago should not color whether he wins an Oscar next month.

Polanski became a surprise front-runner for next month's Oscars by winning best film and best director with *The Pianist* at Britain's Bafta annual film awards Sunday. But Polanski, who fled to France in 1978 as he was about to be sentenced for having sex with a minor, still faces arrest the moment he steps foot in the United States. (Reuters)

#### Princess Diana's Former Lover Sues Fox News

Princess Diana's former lover James Hewitt filed a \$1.08 million breach of contract suit on Monday against Fox News, accusing the media company of firing him as a war correspondent for allegedly leaking the story of his deal.



Roman Polanski

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# Toys for Tots

By Huang Lisha

Finding toys to satisfy the young ones is no problem in this city. However, parents looking for fun items that will also encourage their kids to use their minds face a more difficult task. One solution, albeit a relatively expensive one, is T.O.T.S (The Original Toy Store), a Singaporean store that offers a wide range of constructive, entertaining toys to keep children, and the whole family, busy for hours.

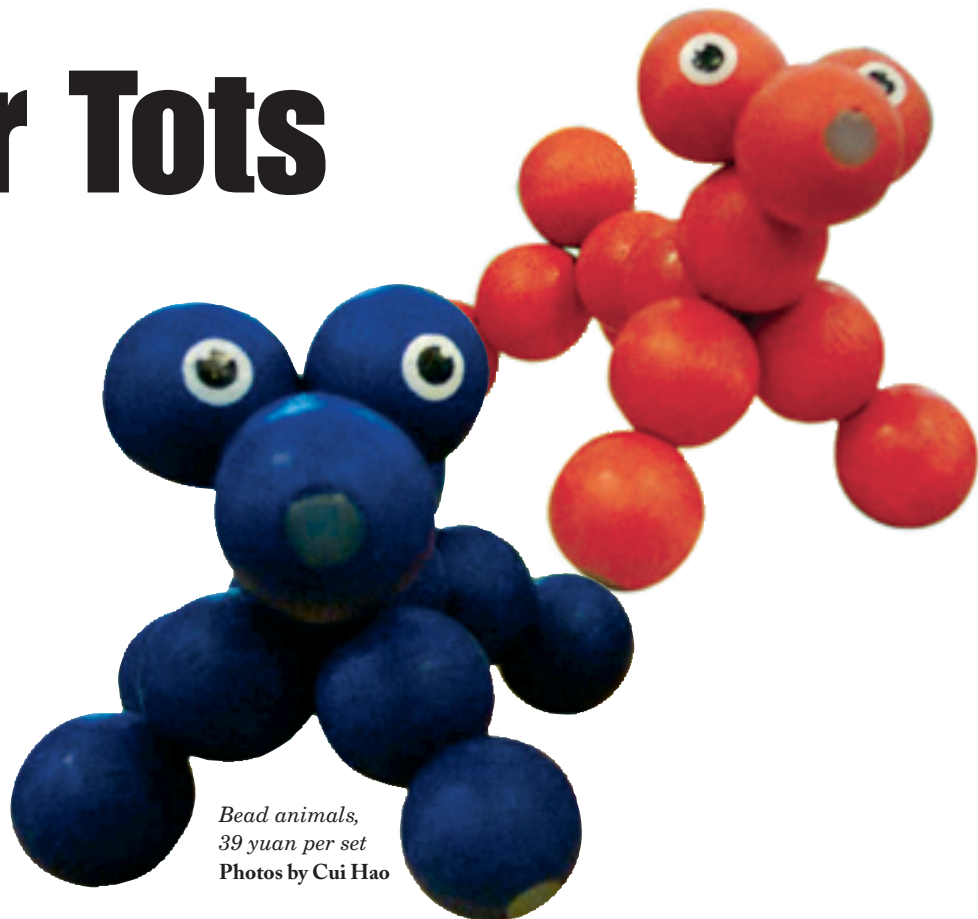
One way to get the family together is "Scotland Yard" (389 yuan), a mystery board game for three to six persons. One player is Mr. X, and the others are Scotland Yard detectives on his trail. In this exciting game, the police must work together to grab their quarry before he can slip away (and win).

A simpler offering is "Building House" (569 yuan), a game targeted at kids around five years old. The set comes with colored plaster, which, when mixed with water, poured into special molds and left for 24 hours, forms tiny tiles and bricks. Following the set's instructions, those pieces can then be glued together to form a beautiful miniature three-story building. The process is less complicated than it sounds, but does take some adult supervision.

Puzzle fans young and old should check out the world's smallest puzzles, on sale in T.O.T.S. The 99-piece puzzles are only six centimeters wide and seven centimeters long. They come in sixteen versions, all of which are reproductions of works by Van Gogh or M.C. Escher. Despite their small size, they are not cheap, going for 89 yuan each.

Knowing that everyone likes to have fun, T.O.T.S also stocks items for the older crowd, such as the Puzzle series of brain-bending toys. Among them, Magic Box (159 yuan) is an ideal gift for that special someone. The cover of the tricky box is inscribed with the character for "love" in the script of the Dongba minority, which looks like a boy giving a flower to a girl. Watch in amusement as a loved one struggles to pry open the top to the beautiful wooden box (it can only be opened when turned to the correct angle).

**Where:** No. 230, Full Link Plaza, Chaoyang **Open:** 10 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 6588 7063



Bead animals,  
39 yuan per set  
Photos by Cui Hao



Zengzifu Building blocks,  
1,290 yuan (top)  
"Pyramid" blocks, 249 yuan (below)



Doggy cushion, 15 yuan  
Photos by Peng Jianwei



Woven chest, 60 yuan

## Natural Weaves

By Salinda

Willow branches can be used as the raw material for unusual baskets and other objects that are both useful and can give a spring-like feel to a room. The No. 4086 stand in the Yaxiu Clothes Market sells all sorts of goods woven from willow, from small containers to larger items such as folding screens, tables and seats.

Pieces made from willow have a lot going for them. Because of the material's airy yet sturdy character, clothes in willow cabinets do not get moldy, hot food cools quickly in bowls that will retain their shape and seats can help keep tushies cool in the summer. Another plus is their prices. Because this stand receives their goods direct from a factory in Shandong Province, costs are very low, with most items going for only 50 to 150 yuan.

Moreover, even though only one material is used in the pieces, they cover a wide range of styles, in part because of different dyes used. Colors can range from basic milky white and yellow to brown, red, sienna and coffee color. Some items, mostly baskets, come covered in colorful pieces of cloth that do not impede their functionality while improving their beauty.

Willow weaves can even spruce up your floor in the form of small cushions that come in a variety of animal-inspired shapes and sell for under 100 yuan each. Colorful bags, shoes and coasters cost only around 10 yuan a piece and make nice gifts or details for the home.

**Where:** No.4086, Yaxiu Clothes Market, Sanlitun, Chaoyang **Open:** 9:30 am - 7:30 pm **Tel:** 13161 171839



Basket, 70 yuan

## Fanciful Fish

By Salinda

Warmish weather, refreshing rains, buds on the trees - spring is on its way. What better way to celebrate than to add a little life to your home in the form of an aquarium full of exotic, fun fish.

A great place to stock up on little swimmers is the China Vegetable Great Forest Flower Market, a huge complex that houses over 50 fish retailers. Those stores offer over 1,000 species of fish, from mundane goldfish to exotic creatures of the seas.

One favorite fish pet is the seven-colored deity (*qicai shenxian* or *yanyu*), known for their bright red color. They come in a wide range of varieties and prices, differing by species and size. A small fish can go for just 30 yuan, while the most expensive fetch around 1,000 yuan each.

At those kinds of prices, you want to make sure the occupants of your aquarium are in top health. There are three keys to picking healthy fish. First, the water in the shop's aquarium should be completely clear and fresh-looking. Second, the fish in question should be active. Finally, check the gills and make sure they are clean and free of growths or sores.



JUWEL pedestal tank,  
8,600 yuan

Photos by Peng Jianwei



A school of seven-colored deities

Those looking to drop some serious gold on their fish should look past the seven-colored deity and go for the bright, shapely *longyu* (dragon fish). One store that specializes in these bold creatures offers one large specimen at the kingly price of 60,000 yuan. A less expensive version from Malaysia sells for 18,000 yuan.

Of course if you are going to buy fish, you have to give them a home. The stores in the Great Forest market offer a complete range of aquariums and equipment, including foreign brands such as Atman and Tetra. A high-quality tank costs from 2,000 yuan to 20,000 yuan, but is worth the extra money, as they provide the best places to enjoy views of the fascinating underwater world. Complete that world with figurines, toys, plants and other decorations to delight fish and humans alike.

**Where:** No.5, Zaojunmiaolu, Haidian **Open:** 8:30 am - 6 pm **Tel:** 6211 9255

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By James Liu

**T**he Japanese are clearly onto something - they have the longest healthy life expectancy of the people of any nation on Earth, according to a study conducted by the United Nations World Health Organization in 2000. In that study, scientists linked their health in large part to their low-fat diet.

Another charm of Japanese food is its emphasis on fresh, seasonal ingredients. So, now that winter is making way to spring, the time is right to enjoy this refined, healthy cuisine.

The most traditional Japanese meal is a combination of plain white rice with a main dish of fish or meat, a side dish, normally vegetables, soup and pickled vegetables.

A typical Japanese dinner starts with some pickled carrot or radish, followed by sashimi, slices of fresh raw fish served with a pungent dipping sauce of soy sauce and wasabi, green Japanese horseradish. Among the more popular kinds of sashimi are maguro (tuna) and toro (fatty tuna).

The next main course is an archetypal Japanese food -- tempura, deep fried seafood and vegetables. All the essential qualities of Japanese cuisine are reflected in the preparation of tempura: fresh ingredients, artful presentation, and precise technique. The results are battered and fried treats that are crisp and light, not heavy and greasy. Shrimp are prized for tempura treatment.

Rice is the staple of Japan, served either on its own or as part of sushi, the most famous Japanese dish. Sushi is made of bundles of rice mixed with sushi vinegar and topped with slices of different materials, most commonly raw fish. It also comes in roll form, the whole package contained in a tasty seaweed skin. Even modest restaurants can offer a wide range of sushi options, while many of the over 100 Japanese restaurants in the capital call themselves sushi specialists.

Dining Japanese style does come at a price, however, as many ingredients are imported, even flown in, to ensure their freshness. Shrewd businessmen have started trying to tap the popularity of the cuisine by pawning off cheaper versions of Japanese classics using frozen fish and shrimp and other sub-par ingredients. Unfortunately, many customers cannot tell between authentic and knock-off Japanese food, and may have poor impressions of the cuisine. On the other hand, the rise in competition has forced even top-level restaurants to lower their prices.

Japanese-recognized restaurants in the capital are Gonin Byakusho at Beijing Hotel, Sakura at Beijing New Otani ChangFuGong Hotel, Nishimura at Shangri-la Hotel Beijing, Nadaman at China World Hotel and the Huache Restaurant. Beijing Today also checked out a less expensive alternative offering fast mid-quality meals.



Photo provided by China World Hotel

## The World's Tastiest Health Food?



Chef Kobayashi making artful dishes

### Gonin Byakusho Restaurant

This Sino-Japanese joint venture restaurant was one of the first Japanese restaurants in Beijing, opening in 1984. Its high level cuisine has drawn such distinguished guests as former prime ministers of Japan.

Head chef Kobayashi, one of two Japanese in the kitchen, has worked at the restaurant for 12 years. He maintains strict standards for the quality and freshness of all ingredients.

The restaurant is furnished in traditional Japanese style, with



Eel and rice set meal (70 yuan)

paper-covered lanterns, classic paintings, dark brown tables and blue door curtains. Waitresses serve customers in kimonos, white socks and wooden sandals.

The gigantic menu, written in English, Japanese, and Chinese, offers a large range of choices, including house specialties tuna tempura and grilled eel. Prices also run a wide spectrum, from 360 yuan for a fatty tuna set meal (*jinqiangyu taocan*) to special sets for children based on sushi, fried chicken or fried potatoes that go for 45 yuan plus a 15 percent of service charge. There are more than 30 kinds of sushi on the menu, most priced around 25 yuan, while more exotic items, such as ark shell sashimi (70 yuan for five pieces) can cost quite a bit more.

**Add:** First floor, Building E, Beijing Hotel, No. 33 Dongchang'an Avenue, Dongcheng **Open:** 11:30 am - 2 pm, 5:30 pm - 9:30 pm **Tel:** 6513 7766 ext. 666 **Average cost:** about 160 yuan per person

### Nadaman Restaurant

Nadaman is a wildly successful chain founded in Japan in 1830. More recently, that success has led the group to expand outside of Japan's border, and it has set up six restaurants overseas,



including one in Beijing.

Diners can get a complete cultural experience in four *washitsi* rooms, private rooms furnished with tatami mats, named after Japan's four most treasured plants: the orchid, pine, bamboo and winter sweet. The main dining room can comfortably accommodate up to 116 customers.

The restaurant provides Tokyo and Osaka-Kyoto style food, as well as the more exoteric *kiri kaiseki* cuisine. Kiri kaiseki food originated in Japanese temples, where monks used to eat only two vegetarian meals a day to show their tolerance and self-restraint. When the monks were too cold and hungry to concentrate on their studies, they put a warm stone in their arms to warm up and stave off their hunger, a practice called *kiri kaiseki*. After centuries of this practice, that name was applied to monastery cuisine, which now has a reputation as top quality food.

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### Special weekend treat for ladies only!

Fifty percent off the regular buffet price for Saturday and Sunday lunch and dinner buffets for all women. **Where:** Traders Café, Traders Hotel. **When:** 12 am-2 pm, 6 pm - 10 pm **Cost:** 80 yuan per person (women only) **Tel:** 6505 2277 ext. 35

### Chinese Festival Dim Sum and Specialty

Chef Huang Rongkun from Macau has prepared a sumptuous menu, such as steamed pork dumplings with quail eggs, fish ball and sea moss, pork knuck-

Gone are the vegetarian limits - today, *kiri kaiseki* is a massive feast using the best ingredients, including fresh beef and seafood.

Manager Matsuzawa offered *Beijing Today* readers a suggestion for telling top shrimp tempura from lesser versions. In good tempura, the tails of the shrimp are wide open, while they are closed in bad attempts. The restaurant's large menu is printed in English, Japanese and Chinese.

**Add:** Third floor, China World Hotel, No. 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie **Open:** 11:30 am - 2 pm, 5:30 pm - 9:30 pm **Tel:** 6505 2266 ext. 39 **Average cost:** about 200 yuan per person



Small sashimi boat, 380 yuan

### Hanakuruma Restaurant

From its vantage point in the Guangming Hotel, this eatery has enjoyed a close tie with the Japanese embassy across the street since opening in 1998.

That success has led to the opening of another branch in Haidian district that started trial business this month and will hold its official launch in March.

The new establishment can seat 128 in western-style and tatami rooms. General manager Pan Jinsheng has worked in the restaur-



Assorted sushi for three, 150 yuan

rant industry for 16 years and studied in Tokyo for two. He said, "we make food the way Japanese do at home," a claim backed up by a head chef who has worked in Japan for eight years.

Compared to the rest of these top-level Japanese restaurants, the prices at Hanakuruma are low. The sashimi set meal costs 100 yuan, one third the price of the same dish at many competitors. The tempura eel set goes for 75 yuan and *edomae* sushi for three a reasonable 150 yuan. The price level for dishes is the lowest when compared with the other mentioned top-level restaurants. A sashimi set meal fetches 100 yuan, one third the price of the same meal in other restaurants. The menu includes over 50 varieties of sushi, starting at a low 8 yuan.

**Add:** Second floor, Zhongdian Building, No. 6 Zhongguancun Nandajie, Haidian **Open:** 11:30 am - 10 pm **Tel:** 6250 1786

**Add:** First floor, Guangming Hotel, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District **Tel:** 6467 8822 ext. 6607 **Average cost:** 80 yuan per person



### Yuanlu Kaiten Sushi

This strong suit of this pioneering mid-price Japanese restaurant is its sushi. *Kaiten* is the Japanese word for the conveyor belt that runs around the middle of the restaurant, carrying fresh sushi to customers. Costs are calculated on color-coded plates. The cheapest sushi option is just 4 yuan for six small rolls, while the most expensive is 30 yuan for tuna sushi.



Three kinds of sushi at Yuanlu

The menu also offers set meals including rice, stewed egg curd, pickled vegetables, miso and salad with an average charge of 40 yuan. Manager Zhang Lei recommends the house special, grilled eel, which goes for 60 yuan. Another popular choice is the *shabu-shabu*, Japanese-style hotpot, that costs 98 yuan.

**Add:** First floor, Zhonghua Building, No.2A Fuxingmenwai Dajie **Open:** 11 am - 10 pm **Tel:** 6856 9209 **Average cost:** 40 yuan and up per person

### Other Japanese restaurants in the city: Nishimura Restaurant at Shangri-La Hotel

**Tel:** 6841 2211 ext. 2719

### Tokyo Restaurant at Kunlun Hotel

**Tel:** 6500 3388 ext. 5695

### Jianghuchuan Restaurant at Taiwan Hotel

**Tel:** 6513 6688 ext. 8034

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**Tel:** 6506 9625, 6506 9626

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**Tel:** 64607058

### Genji Restaurant at Hilton Hotel

**Tel:** 6466 2288 ext. 7402

### Fujiya Restaurant at Media Center

**Tel:** 6851 4422 ext. 4279

Photos by Zhuang Jian

## Dining Out

### Asian Food Street

Visiting Chef Rocky Chua from Singapore will join the Coffee Garden team, to draw on multi-ethnic heritage of the various Asian countries and recreate their authentic delicacies, including Malaysian laksa noodle soup, Indonesian nonya pork and many others. **Where:** Coffee Garden, Shangri-La Hotel **When:** Daily 11:30 am-2:15 pm, 5:30 pm-9:30 pm, **Tel:** 6841 2211 ext. 2715

### Gourmet Creperie

Cuisine Galley, the first creperie restaurant in Beijing, offers an exciting a-la-carte menu

and a wide variety of gourmet crepes. **Where:** Cuisine Galley, Novotel Xinqiao Beijing, No. 2 Dongjiaominxiang, Chongwen. **Tel:** 6513 3366 ext. 2201.

### Bubbly Sunday Brunch

Due to popular demand, Sunday brunches with champagne and live oysters continue at the Garden Court restaurant. **Where:** St. Regis Beijing. **Cost:** 218 yuan plus 15 percent, includes juice, coffee or tea. 398 yuan plus 15 percent includes free flow of Veuve Clicquot champagne, juices, coffee or tea. **Tel:** 6460 6688 ext. 2340

### Cocktail Specials

Starting in March, Lobby

Lounge bartenders will create delicious, nutritious virgin fruit cocktails. "Cool Running", made from honeydew melon and cucumber is one of the six irresistible creations. **Where:** Lobby Lounge, Kerry Centre Hotel **Cost:** all cocktails 68 each **Tel:** 6561 8833

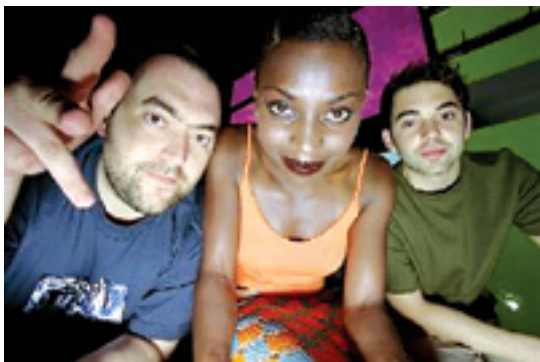
### Surf 'n Turf Night

Starting March 1, discover theme dinners every Saturday at Silk Road Trattoria. Tomorrow, it's surf 'n turf night! Mouthwatering grilled skewers meld chicken, lamb, beef, lobster, prawns and more. Also enjoy a bountiful buffet. **Where:** Silk Road Trattoria, the Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing **Tel:** 6590

By Wesley Lei



## Morcheeba



Skye Edwards and Godfrey brothers

British trip-hop outfit Morcheeba will play in Beijing in March. The band, who have released albums including *Who Can You Trust*, *Big Calm* and *Charango* since their inception in 1995, merge a mix of

musical styles, including trip-hop, dub, folk, jazz, reggae, psychedelia, soul and R'n'B. Vocalist Skye Edwards is the focal point of Morcheeba, offset by brothers Ross Godfrey (guitars, bass, keyboards) and Paul Godfrey (drums, percussion, scratching).

**Where:** Yan Club, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** March 8-9, 7:30 pm **Admission:** adults 150 yuan, students 80 yuan **Tel:** 8457 3506

## Stage

### Dear Elena Sergeevna

Based on a drama produced in the former Soviet Union and performed by students of the China Central Academy of Drama as their graduation presentation. The drama reflects serious issues and satirizes society and the education system. The story concerns a group of students who set out to play a cruel game on their teacher, a weak, but kind young woman.

**Where:** China Children's Theatre, 64 Dong'anmennei Dajie **When:** March 4-19, 7:30 pm (except March 10) **Admission:** 40-200 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 508

### The Heavens and the Human World

Directed by Mu Tou, starring Wang Quanyou, Li Jian, Wei Chunrong and Tang Hexiang.

A couple has been married for years. They have a common and regular life, so they become fed up and decide to change partners and start a new life. But after a while, they are fed up with their new lives again. They want to change back, but how and what to change?

**Where:** Beibingmasi Theatre, Beibingmasi Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nadajie, Dongcheng **When:** till March 9, 7:30 pm **Admission:** adults 80 yuan, students 30 yuan **Tel:** 6406 0175, 6404 8021



populay comedy actor Chen Peisi

### Tuo'er

A four-act comedy drama. Tuo'er refers to people who can help artists achieve their aims. Comedian Chen Peisi stars as a man who opens a matchmaking company. The hero invites his wife and relatives to act as his Tuo'er to attract rich bachelors. Hoping to get rich by doing business with one wealthy bachelor, he finds himself caught in a dilemma when his wife unexpectedly falls in love with the client, an overseas Chinese businessman.

**Where:** Chang'an Theatre **When:** March 6-9, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-480 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext 198

### Crazy Teaching Methods

Performed by Wuren Didai (No Man's Land), a Hong Kong group founded by Deng Shurong in 1997, this drama relies heavily on body language to depict the life of a misunderstood teacher. Also includes a generous sprinkling of Cantonese ad slogans and one-liners.

**Where:** Beibingmasi Theatre, Beibingmasi Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nadajie **When:** February 28, 7:15 pm **Admission:** 30-120 yuan **Tel:** 6406 0175, 6404 8021

## Sports

### Great Wall—eight towers high

This hike was originally planned for February, but was canceled due to the snow. It is a flexible walk on a stretch of the Great Wall to the west of Shentangyu Valley. Our local guide will take us along the wall, passing eight guard towers and then back from a valley. Those who want an easier walk can hike along the wall with the main group as far as they want and come back the same way.

**Where:** Huairou, north of Beijing **When:** March 2, meet 8:30 am outside Starbucks at Lido Hotel, or 9 am at Capital Paradise front gate, return 5 pm **Admission:** adults 150 yuan, children 100 yuan **Tel:** 13701 003694 **Email:** bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk

## Movies



Lu Qi as Deng Xiaoping

### Deng Xiaoping

Directed by Ding Yinmeng, starring Lu Qi. This is the first cinematic attempt to examine Deng Xiaoping's mature career. The story begins on the 35th anniversary of the founding of the PRC on October 1, 1984 and traces back to 1976. The movie spans the twenty years from Deng's return to power through to his last visit to southern China. In Chinese.

**Where:** local cinemas **When:** throughout March

### Hero

Directed by Zhang Yimou, starring Jet Lee, Zhang Ziyi, Tony Leung, Maggie Cheung, Chen Daoming. Nominated for an Oscar for Best Foreign Film. Chinese with English subtitles.

**Where:** Cherry Lane Movies, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu **When:** February 28-29, 8 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 6430 1398 **Email:** michael@cherrylanemovies.com.cn

### Cala, My Dog

Directed by Lu Xuechang, starring Ge You. The story is about a middle-aged working man, known as Lao Er, whose chief source of stability and comfort in life is his dog, Cala. One day, when his wife is out walking Cala, a policeman confiscates the unregistered canine. As Lao Er endeavors to recover his dog, the difficult circumstances of his life are revealed. In Chinese.

**Where:** local cinemas **When:** from March 5

## Performance

### Zheng Concert

Canadian-Chinese musician Han Mei will perform with the China Philharmonic Orchestra. She will combine the zheng with western instruments while retaining the essence and beauty of the traditional instrument. In this concert she will perform *When Cranes Fly Home*, written especially for her by American-Singaporean composer John Sharpley.

**Where:** Poly Theatre **When:** March 2, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 50-300 yuan **Tel:** 6506 5354

### The Red Detachment of Women

Performed by the Central Ballet of China, this classic revolutionary ballet focuses on a group of female soldiers in Hainan Island during the Civil War (1927-1937). If the idea of rifle-toting, khaki-clad ballerinas does something for you, this is an opportunity not to be missed.

**Where:** Poly Theatre **When:** March 7-8, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 180-680 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7674 ext 508



## Exhibitions



Jiangnan scene by Li Xiongcai

### Contemporary Art Exhibition

This exhibition includes oil painting, watercolors, prints and other artworks. Paintings by renowned Li Xiongcai, the leading exponent of the Ling Nan school, feature powerful brush strokes and are full of boundless energy. Selected new works by Feng Linzhang, Hu Yongkai, Song Di and Wang Mingming will also be shown, as well as the super realism of Liu Baomin, Xin Yi and Yin Kun.

**Where:** Wangfung Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie **When:** March 1-28, 10 am-7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6523 3320



Village by Wang Jianren

### Wang Jianren Exhibition

During 14 years living abroad, oil painter Wang Jianren has never stopped thinking of the motherland and its rich culture. This exhibition features the architectural world of China, painted with love and respect for the ancient civilization and his country.

**Where:** Creation Gallery, north end of Ritan Donglu **When:** March 2-9, 10 am-7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8561 7570



Red door by Zhang Guoning

### Remember Old Beijing

Zhang Guoning, graduate of the Painting Department of Beijing Teacher's College, has a strong affection for the hutong and siheyuan of the ancient capital. His oil paintings show tortuous and narrow lanes, houses and surrounding walls and red doors with the paint peeling.

**Where:** Da A Oil Paintings Studio, 42 Beiwa Lu, Xibalizhuang, Haidian **When:** March 1-April 1, 10 am-10 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 13501 253020

### Nine Artists

Wang Huaxiang, Zheng Xuewu and others present the latest fruits of their musings. Includes Wang Huaxiang's woodcuts and Zheng Xuewu's densely wrought mixed media works. Painter-poet Feng Feng displays his stark abstract pieces, which often contain mineral pigments for an added richness.

**Where:** Red Gate Gallery **When:** till March 9, 10 am-5 pm (Tuesday to Sunday) **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6525 1005

### Xie Daren Exhibition

Xie Daren has been painting on lacquer for 30 years. His paintings have been exhibited in Japan, France America, Italian and Spain

**Where:** Fa Fa Gallery, 2 Xiangjiang Beilu, Jingshun Lu, Quanfa Garden Clubhouse, Chaoyang **When:** March 16-31, 9 am-10 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8430 2587



Painting by Zhang Jin

### Universal Diversity

An exhibition by three renowned contemporary Chinese artists: Yang Gang, Zhang Jin and Bob Yan.

**Where:** Yan Club Arts Centre, 4

Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** till March 28, 10 am-7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8457 3506

### The Model of Time—Lei Feng

An exhibition featuring propaganda materials related to Lei Feng, whose name is synonymous with doing good. It includes stamps, photos, books and films, some of which are on public display for the first time.

**Where:** Dazhongsi Guzhong Museum, (Big Bell Temple Museum) 31 Beisanhuan Xilu, Haidian **When:** till March 18, 10 am-4 pm **Tel:** 6255 0843



Calligraphy by Yang Yang

### Feng Feng, Zhang Chen and Yang Yang

Feng Feng oil paintings feature a combination of ancient and modern. Zhang Chen oil paintings are based on life in northeast of China, expressing his love for his hometown. Yang Yang's calligraphy work consists of love stories and poems, decorated with flowers.

**Where:** Qin Gallery, Huaweili Enjoy Paradise 1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City) Chaoyang **When:** February 28-March 14, 9:30 am-7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461

## Music

### Music at Get Lucky

Tomorrow night Red Crystal (*Hong Shuijing*) and No Color (*Meiyou Yanse*) be on the stage. Next Thursday, Folk Music magazine will host an evening of unplugged tunes, featuring Xiaohe, Meihao Yaodian (*Beautiful Drugstore*) Wan Xiaoli, Feixu (*Ruin*), Buyi (*Cotton Cloth*) and Muma (*Wooden Horse*).

**Where:** Get Lucky, 500 meters east of the south gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** 9:30 pm **Admission:** adults 40 yuan, students 30 yuan **Tel:** 6429 9109

### 666 live at Banana

All the way from German, 666 have had a string of hits in Europe, including Alarma, Amokk, Paradoxx and Bomba.

**Where:** Banana Club, Jianguomenwai Dajie **When:** March 7, 8:30 pm **Admission:** 80 yuan at door, presale 60 yuan **Tel:** 13910 051803

### ESL and Sand

ESL from Japan are playing tonight, on Saturday, Sand (*Shazi*) will hit the stage.

**Where:** What, opposite north gate of Business and Economics University, Chaoyang **When:** 9 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 13910 209249

### Christian Smith

DJ and producer Christian Smith, brings his amalgamation of funky house and tribal techno to Beijing.

**Where:** the Club **When:** February 28, 10 pm **Tel:** 13001 135089

### Immortal Beethoven Fifth of a series

The China Philharmonic Orchestra performs Piano concerto No. 1 in C Major, symphony No. 1 C in Major and more.

**Where:** Poly Theatre **When:** March 15, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 50-380 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7674 ext 508

### Yun-di Li Piano Recital Concert

As a talented young pianist, Yun-di Li was awarded the Gold Medal of the International Chopin Piano Competition in 2000, becoming both the youngest winner and the first Chinese to receive this honor. The International Chopin Piano Competition is held every five years and there were no gold medals awarded in the previous two contests.

**Where:** Poly Theatre **When:** March 16, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 180-880 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7674 ext 508

### Irish Chamber Orchestra Beijing Tour

The Irish Chamber Orchestra is one of Ireland's most accomplished ensembles. Consisting of the crème de la crème of Irish string players, this orchestra has received plaudits both at home and abroad for its high standards of performance. Under the artistic direction of Fionnuala Hunt, and with the appointment in 1998 of celebrated conductor and violinist, Bruno Giuranna as principal guest conductor, the orchestra continues to give a new and refreshing perspective on the chamber music repertoire through its inimitable approach to performance.

**Where:** Forbidden City Concert Hall **When:** March 28, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-580 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7674 ext 508

### Famous Female Musicians' Concert

Three renowned female musicians

will give a special concert to mark next week's Woman's Day. See Page 12 for details.

**Where:** Nationality Cultural Palace Theatre **When:** March 7, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-480 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7674 ext 508



Yu Lina and Bao Huiqiao

### Oscar Film Themes Symphony Concert

Film highlights accompanied by the theme music performed live is one of the more unusual upcoming attractions in Beijing. The China Opera and Dance Drama Theatre Symphony Orchestra claims it is the most authoritative one for the job as it records such music for many of the films. Familiar tunes will be featured from films like *Titanic*, *Jurassic Park*, *Waterloo Bridge*.

**Where:** Nationality Cultural Palace Theatre **When:** March 8, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-380 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7674 ext 508

## Lecture

### Non-Western Instruments in Western Contemporary Music

Canadian-Chinese musician Han Mei, is an improvisational artist who plays traditional Chinese instruments. She has two Master's degrees in ethnomusicology, one from the Musical Research Institute of the Chinese Arts Academy, another from the university of British Columbia. She has toured North America performing both traditional Chinese music and contemporary scores by Canadian and Chinese composers, and is performing in Beijing this week. She and her friend Randy Raine-Reusch, a composer and multi-instrumentalist, will host a lecture on "Non-Western Instruments in Western Contemporary Music."

**Where:** Central Conservatory of Music **When:** March 4 **Tel:** 6506 5345



Temple of Heaven

### Imperial Tomb Construction and Concept

Professor Zhao Tiesheng will unveil the history and principles of Qingdongling (Eastern Qing Tombs) in Hebei, which have been listed as a World Heritage Site, and the Ming Tombs in Beijing, discussing the fengshui and imperial design methodology used by emperors of China. English traslation provide.

**Where:** Lee's Antique Carpet, Liangmaqiao Lu, close to 21st Century Hotel **When:** March 1, 2:30-4:30 pm **Admission:** adults 40 yuan, students 30 yuan **Tel:** 8851 4913

### Beauty of the Temple of Heaven

A leading scholar in aesthetics from Beijing University, Yang Xin, will discuss the construction of the Temple of Heaven, and contrast it with that of Forbidden City. English traslation provided.

**Where:** Lee's Antique Carpet, Liangmaqiao Lu, near 21st Century Hotel **When:** March 2, 2:30-4:30 pm **Admission:** adults 40 yuan, students 30 yuan **Tel:** 8851 4913

### Health Lectures

Professionals from the Beijing Friendship Hospital present a series of health-related lectures on mental health, diet and more. In Chinese only.

**Where:** Beijing Friendship Hospital, 95 Yong'an Lu, Xuanwu **When:** March 6, 2 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6301 4411 ext 3482

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By Guo Yuandan





# A Southern China in the North

By Huang Lisha/Zhang Qingning



A distant-view of the haystack-like Maiji Mountain

Last week, *Plan* introduced a part of Gansu Province known as Little Tibet. To-day we continue our look at this desert and mountain province with a visit to Tianshui (天水).

Stepping out of the railway station at Tianshui, a visitor might think for a moment that their train has somehow deposited them in lush southern China. The scenery, and even the climate, has much in common with that of the lower Yangtze River basin.

It is no wonder Tianshui is known as "longshang xiaojiangnan," meaning "the southern China of Gansu." Tianshui is like an open air museum, complete with ancient grottoes, and historic architecture, relics, and tombs.

## Maijishan Grottoes

Maiji Mountain (麦积山) is 45 kilometers from Tianshui. The grottoes there housing Buddhist frescoes and sculptures are one of China's four famous grottoes, the others being Mogao Grottoes at Dunhuang, Yungang Grottoes in Shanxi Province, and Luoyang Longmen Grottoes in Henan.

From a distance, the mountain has the appearance of a haystack, which is what the name means in Chinese.

The grottoes, carved out of the side of an 80-meter cliff, were begun in 384 AD, during the Qin Dynasty. Since then, they have been restored and enlarged on several occasions over the course of ten dynasties. Today, there are 194 caves, containing over 7,200 clay statues, and 1,300 square meters of murals. The caves are accessed by way of plank walkways.

The most famous attractions

at Maijishan Grottoes are the clay statues. As at Dunhuang's Mogao Grottoes, the local stone is soft and unsuitable for carving, so the ancient artisans focused on clay figurines and murals. There are a number of stone sculptures to be seen, which were brought in from other parts of China.

Partially exposed to the elements over the centuries, there is little remaining of the original coloring that once decorated the statues. But the exquisite skills of the unknown artists remain clearly evident. Wrinkles in the sculptured clothing, delicate muscle definition, even the outline of veins, give the clay figures a vivid sense of life.

Maijishan Grottoes also serves as a record of the various influ-



No. 5 cave

ences prevalent during different historical periods. The earliest Buddha statues display distinctly Tibetan or Indian features, both in physical appearance and style of dress, while those made after the Northern Wei Period (386-534) are all in the style of Han Chinese.

Unlike the otherworldly and sacrosanct style of many Chinese Buddha statues, the Maijishan Buddhas display a benign countenance, with their heads slightly lowered.

Many of the Buddha statues are said to be modeled after women of the imperial court, sitting gracefully with their long skirts spread over the lotus-shaped platform.

One in particular, with crescent moon shaped brows, long narrow eyes and full lips is believed to be a likeness of a wife of one of the Northern Wei emperors. The boy and the girl statues in No. 123 cave are vivid and life-like portrayals of children living in northwest China.

## Three Kingdoms Culture

Of strategic importance at various times throughout Chi-

na's long history, Tianshui has been the backdrop to many important events, and is inextricably woven into the history of the Three Kingdoms period.

Seventy five kilometers west of Tianshui is Qishanbao (祁山堡), site of the headquarters of the famous commander Zhuge Liang when he commanded the army of Shu Kingdom to attack Wei around 228.

The fortress both Wei and Shu were desperate to control was JiETING (街亭), first occupied by the Shu Kingdom, and then falling under the control of Wei as a result of one the negligence of Shu general Ma Su.

In order to recapture Qishan, Zhuge Liang massed his troops successively six times, but each attempt ended in failure. To commemorate this distinguished statesman and militarist, local people constructed the Zhuge Wuhou Shrine (诸葛武侯祠) in Qishanbao during the Northern and Southern Dynasties period.

The shrine is composed of over 20 halls, in which stand statues of Zhuge Liang and Guan Yu, a general of the Shu Kingdom. Today, Luangu Dui (bone heap), Da Ying (great headquarters), and some other relics of the ancient battle zone can still be seen around JiETING.



Fuxi Temple

## Fuxi Temple

Fuxi is a mythical Chinese ruler, the first of the Three August Ones (the other two are Shennong and Suiren) credited with the invention of musical instruments, *Ba Gua* (the Eight Diagrams), hunting, fishing, the domestication of animals, and establishing the dragon as totem of the Chinese.

According to legend, a great flood inundated the world, killing all of humanity, except for Fuxi and his sister Nuwa. With the future of humankind at stake, the two siblings each carried a millstone up Kunlun

Mountain and rolled them down, one from the south peak and one from the north.

They agreed that if the two millstones collided, it would signify that the gods wished them to marry and procreate. Fortunately for humankind, that is exactly what happened.

Visitors to Tianshui can see the two millstones preserved at Fuxi Temple (伏羲庙). It is said that touching them will promote family harmony and bring blessings to your marriage.

Situated in the west part of Tianshui County, Fuxi Temple was first built in 1,347, during the Ming Dynasty, but since then has been subject to numerous renovations and enlargements.

Originally there were 64 cypress trees in the yard, symbolizing the 64 lines of the Eight Diagrams, but now only 37 remain. It is said that on Fuxi's birthday, the 16th day of the first month of the lunar year, all the cypress trees will shake off their leaves in celebration. Praying at the foot of the tree with the fewest leaves will bring good luck.

Held on the 13th day of the fifth lunar month, the Tianshui Fuxi Culture Festival has become an important annual event attracting tourists from within China and around world.

## Dadiwan Relics Site

There is nothing immediately unusual about Qin'an County (秦安), 58 kilometers from Tianshui, however it is here, at the Dadiwan Relics Site (大地湾文化遗址) that fossils and other relics were unearthed in 1978, suggesting the area was inhabited by a Neolithic civilization 5,000 to 8,000 years ago.

Remains of wooden structures found in Dadiwan are considered to be the earliest examples of palace-style architecture found in

China. The structures, including a main hall, rear hall, and east and west halls, cover an area of 420 square meters. The walls, hearths, and doors of the structure feature a fireproof layer.

Colored pottery unearthed at Dadiwan is among the earliest found in China. The predominant patterns decorating these are birds and fish. Marks resembling ripples in water and plants can also be seen, which some scholars have suggested represent the origin of Chinese calligraphy.

## A hot spring bath to unwind

Jiezi Hot Springs (街子温泉) can be found in a valley at Maiji Mountain, three kilometers from the town of Jiezi. There is an abundant flow of water from the two springs here, and the water can reach a temperature of 40 C.

The spring water, which contains 19 trace elements, is reputedly of high medical value. There are also hot mineral springs at Qingshui (清水) 87 kilometers east of Tianshui, and Wushan (武山), 109 kilometers west of Tianshui, providing a perfect way to unwind after a long day of sightseeing.

**Getting there:** Train T75 from Beijing West Railway Station to Tianshui costs about 330 yuan (hardsleeper) and takes 18 hours. There are regular buses from Tianshui to all the above sites.

**Important reminders:** The average temperature in Tianshui is 11 C, spring, summer and autumn are all ideal for traveling. Be sure to sample the local fruit, such as Tianshui Huanian Apple, Qin Chang'an Pear and Tianshui Juicy Peach, as well as delicious specialties like Zhangchuan Guokui (张川锅盔), a kind of bread, and Qin'an Pork Belly Soup (秦安肚丝汤).



Tianshui countryside

Photos by Liu Guoming



Ming Dynasty blue and white porcelain jar

## Porcelain Fragment Museum

By Guo Yuandan

Tiny in scale compared to some of Beijing's better known museums, the thing that really sets this museum apart is that visitors are allowed, in fact encouraged, to handle the exhibits.

The Mumingtang Ancient Porcelain Specimen Museum (睦明堂古瓷片标本博物馆) in Chongwen District is the only museum in Beijing with a collection consisting solely of broken porcelain.

Although it may seem strange to the uninitiated, collecting pieces of ancient porcelain is an increasingly popular pastime, for the simple reason that it is affordable.

Few would be collectors have pockets deep enough to contemplate the purchase of an intact Tang Dynasty vase or bowl, but a fragment of such a piece is a different story. "Porcelain fragments are real historic relics and have a high collection value," says Bai Ming, founder and curator of the museum. Having collected porcelain fragments for many years, Bai opened the private museum in 2002 to encourage more people to touch history.

Mumingtang Museum, one of eight privately owned museums in Beijing, was originally a tea-house, and there are still tables and chairs arranged along one side, where visitors can take a break from cultural studies. "That is the tea-house part," says Bai Ming.

The museum boasts a collection of almost 50,000 pieces of porcelain, 1,200 of which are labeled and displayed in chronological order (some feature labels and descriptions in English). The earliest pieces date back to the Han Dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD), and there are samples from every major period between then and the Republic of China.

Due to space constraints, other pieces are on rotating display. Some are classified according to the kiln in which they were fired. Ruyao, Dingyao, Guanyao, Geyao and Junyao were the five royal kilns of the Song Dynasty. During the Tang Dynasty, Changsha Kiln was pre-eminent.

While visitors to museums generally have to content themselves with admiring the objects of their affection from the other side of a glass cabinet, at Mumingtang Museum there is a special section where visitors can freely handle numerous ancient pieces, judging for themselves the quality of the workmanship.

**Where:** 1 Donghuashi Beitiao (东花市北条), Chongwen District  
**Admission:** 10 yuan  
**Tel:** 6718 6939



Blue and white Guanyao kiln porcelain fragments

Photos by Li Shuzhuan